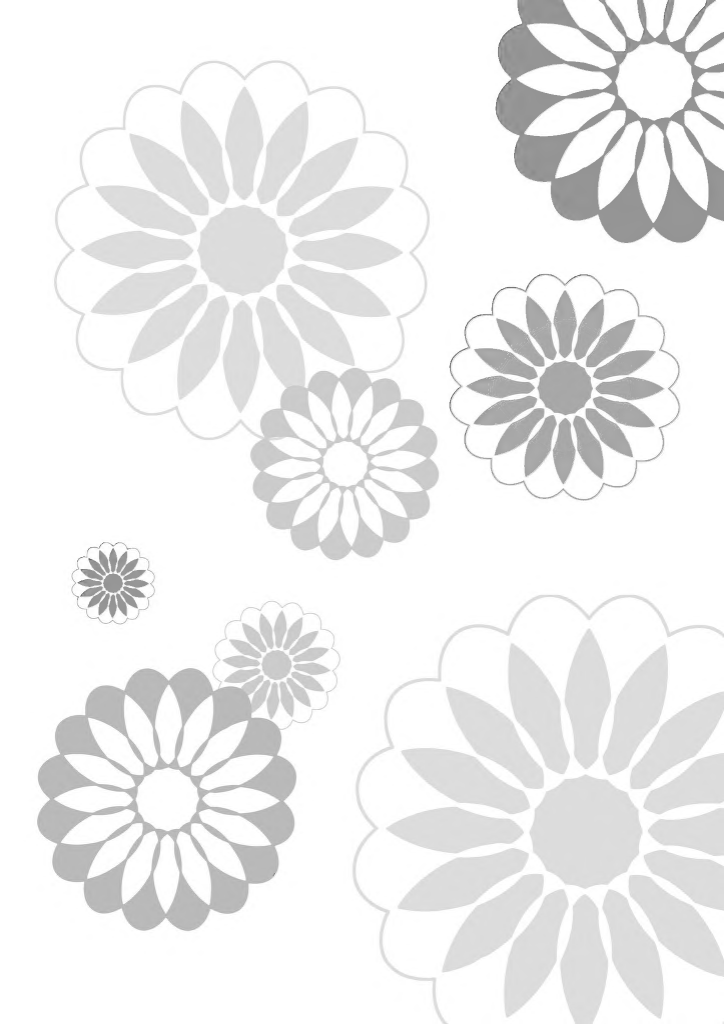
Oh My Goddess!
ああっ女神さまっ
23
藤島康介
KOSUKE FUJISHIMA



Oh My Goddess!

ああっ女神さまっ 23

STORY AND ART BY
Kosuke Fujishima

TRANSLATION BY
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LETTERING AND TOUCH-UP BY
Susie Lee AND Betty Dong
WITH Tom2K

DARK HORSE MANGA™

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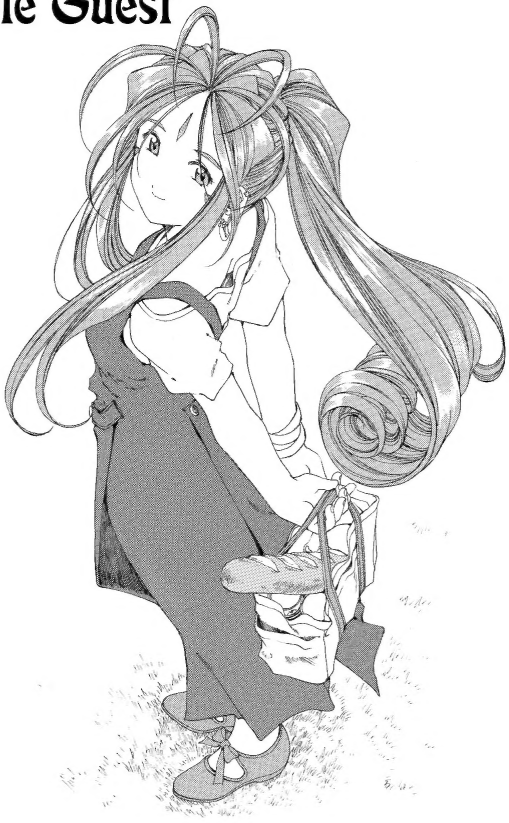
CHAPTER 142

Bell and Keiichi and the Terrible Guest



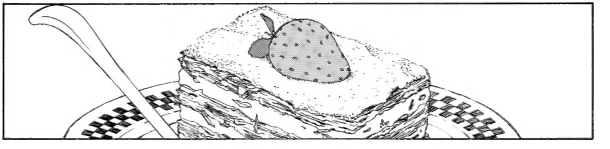
YES ...?
I WAS THINK-ING...

...YOU'RE NOT REALLY LISTENING.
AWSA BATTERY
AWSA BATTERY
MOTOR OIL
skreeech
DESSERT, CHIHIRO?
OH!
I'D... uh...
...LOVE SOME.

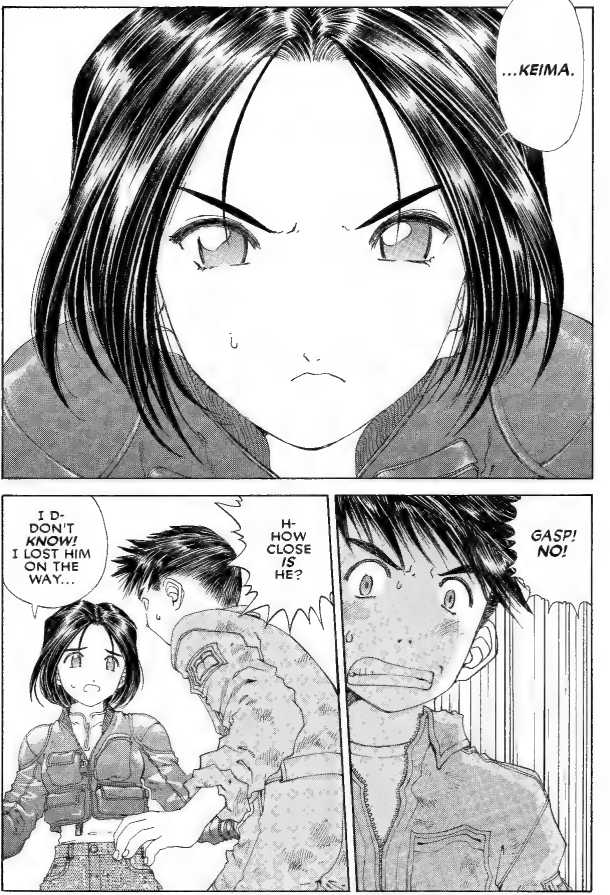
keiichi?
keiichi?
STOMP
STOMP
KEI-
CHAN!!

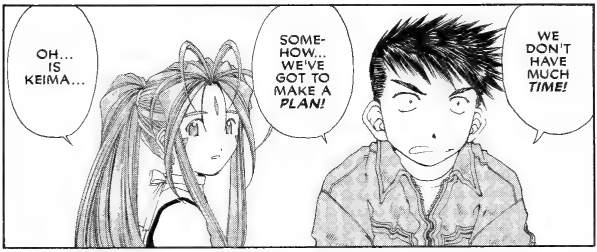
I'M MEGUMI... KEIICHI'S *SISTER!*
SORRY! I'M SO RUDE!
oops
....
Pi

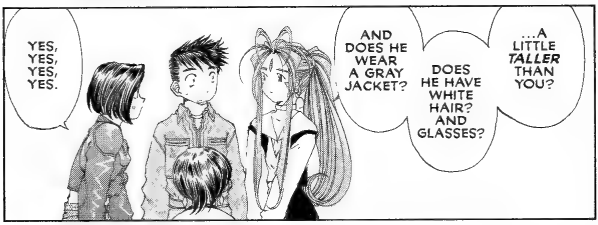
PLEASE DO SIT DOWN.
AWW! I JUST *ADORE* POLITE YOUNG WOMEN.

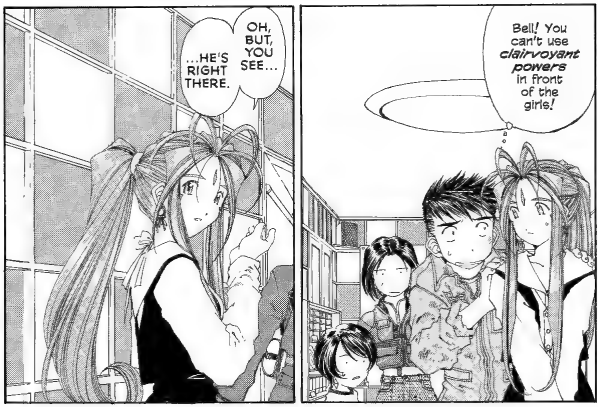


AMAZING, BELL!
♥
mmmm!
KEIICHI! HE'S COMING!
WHO?
THANK YOU, MEGUMI.
YEAH! I REMEMBER WHAT I WANTED TO SAY TO YOU!
RIGHT!

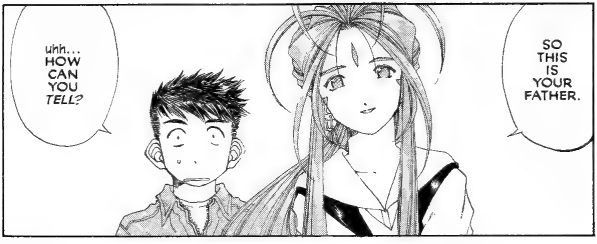

...KEIMA.
I D-DON'T KNOW! I LOST HIM ON THE WAY...
H-HOW CLOSE IS HE?
GASP! NO!

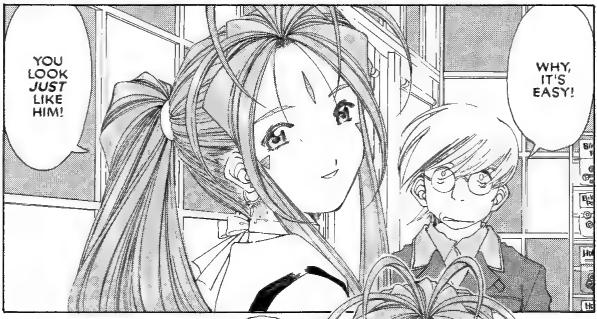

OH... IS KEIMA...
SOME-HOW... WE'VE GOT TO MAKE A PLAN!
WE DON'T HAVE MUCH TIME!


YES, YES, YES, YES.
AND DOES HE WEAR A GRAY JACKET?
DOES HE HAVE WHITE HAIR? AND GLASSES?
...A LITTLE TALLER THAN YOU?


OH, BUT, YOU SEE...
...HE'S RIGHT THERE.
Bell! You can't use clairvoyant powers in front of the girls!

uhh...

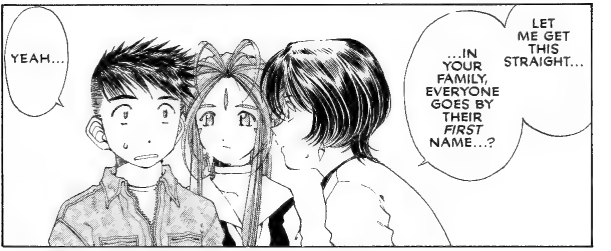

uhh... HOW CAN YOU TELL?
SO THIS IS YOUR FATHER.

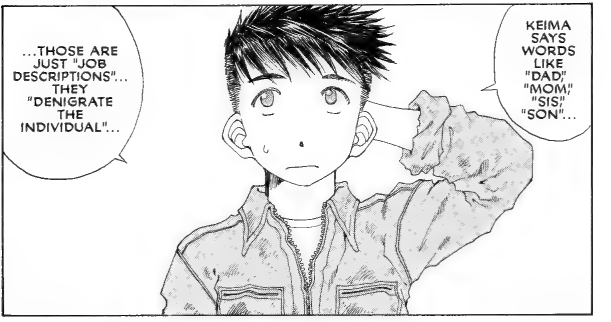

YOU LOOK *JUST* LIKE HIM!
WHY, IT'S EASY!

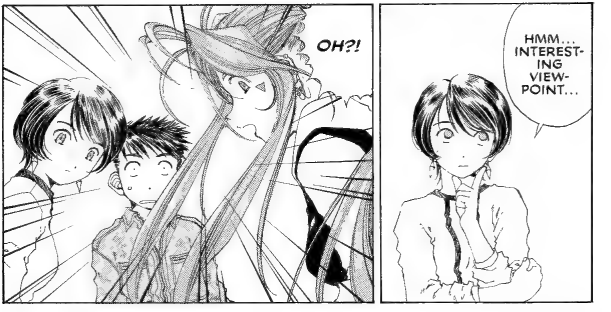
HMM... YEAH... SHE'S RIGHT...
I'M *BELL-DANDY!*
WELCOME!

PLEASED TA MEETCHA!
CHIHIRO FUJIMI, OWNER OF WHIRLWIND, THIS FINE ESTABLISH-MENT--
um...
whoosh
SPAK

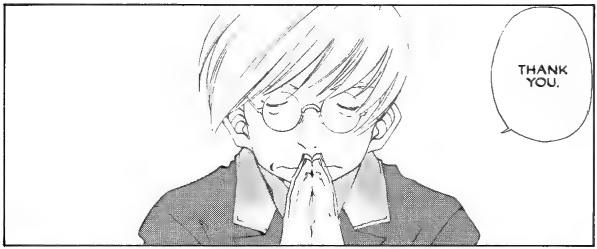
KEIMA'S, WELL...
...NOT GOOD WITH WOMEN.
!
OH! YOU MEAN HE'S...
I'M SORRY TO DISAPPOINT YOU ABOUT...
...whatever it is you're disappointed about.
BUT HE'S FINE WITH...
...TAKANO.
TAKANO?
OUR MOM.
HEY, CAN YOU, LIKE, COME DOWN?

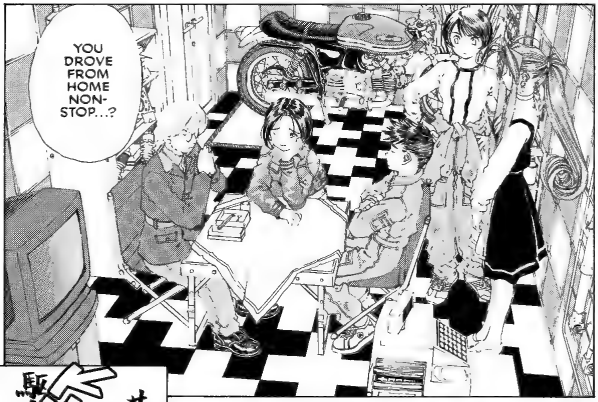

YEAH...
LET ME GET THIS STRAIGHT...
...IN YOUR FAMILY, EVERYONE GOES BY THEIR *FIRST* NAME...?


...THOSE ARE JUST "JOB DESCRIPTIONS"... THEY "DENIGRATE THE INDIVIDUAL"...
KEIMA SAYS WORDS LIKE "DAD," "MOM," "SIS," "SON"...


OH?!
HMM... INTEREST-ING VIEW-POINT...

HE'S OKAY, BELL!
JUST DIDN'T *EAT* OR *SLEEP*, I BET...

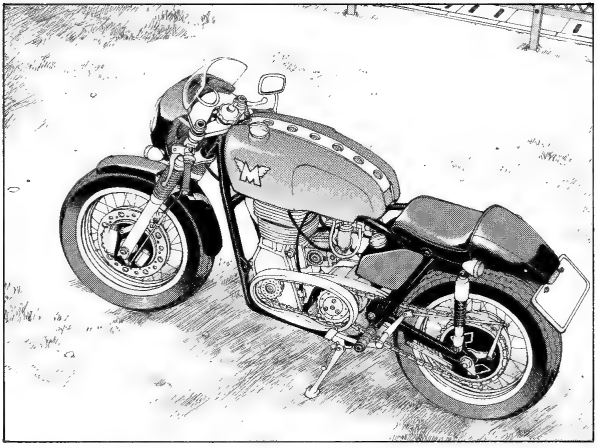

THANK YOU.


YOU DROVE FROM HOME NON-STOP...?

駆
KUSHIRO
串路
苦死呂
久代
Hmmm...
藤路

KUSHIRO. WHY?
MORISATO! WHERE'S "HOME"?

UH...
FROM HOKKAIDO? TO HERE? ON WHAT?
WHAT? YOU MEAN, THE ONE WITH THE "KUSH!" YOU WRITE LIKE THIS AND THE "RO" YOU WRITE LIKE THAT?
Y-YES...
....
FOR REAL ?!



YOU'RE *KIDDING,* RIGHT.
NO. YOU *REALLY* CAME NON-STOP ON *THIS.*

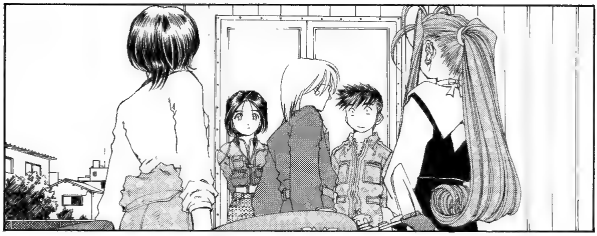
IT'S TRULY...
...INCRED-IBLE...

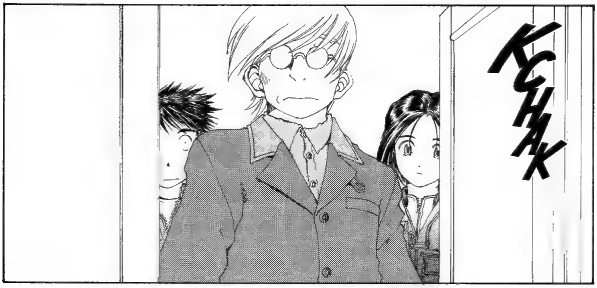
IT'S NOT SO... INCREDIBLE.

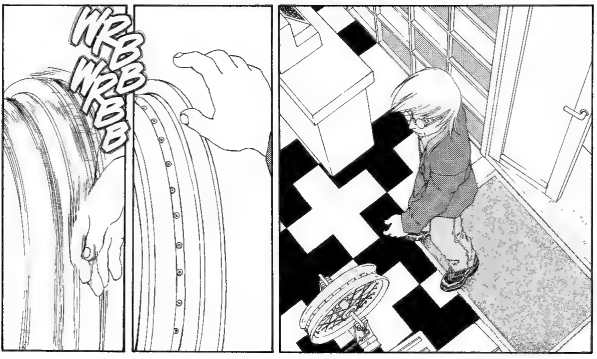
WE ALL USED TO RIDE THESE...
...TODAY'S BIKES ARE... COMFY.

OH NO... I DIDN'T MEAN IT LIKE THAT.
huh?
I MEAN SHE CAME ALL THAT WAY...
YOU MUST REALLY LOVE HER...
...AND SHE ISN'T EVEN TIRED.
...YES?

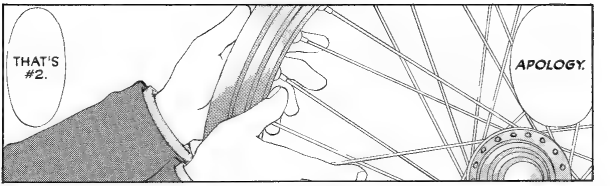
YEAH...
LOOK AT THAT CRANK-CASE...
...ALL THAT WAY, AND NOT A DROP OF OIL LEAKING...
...WHO ARE YOU?

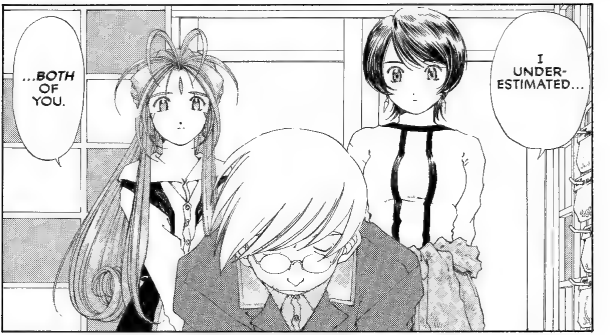


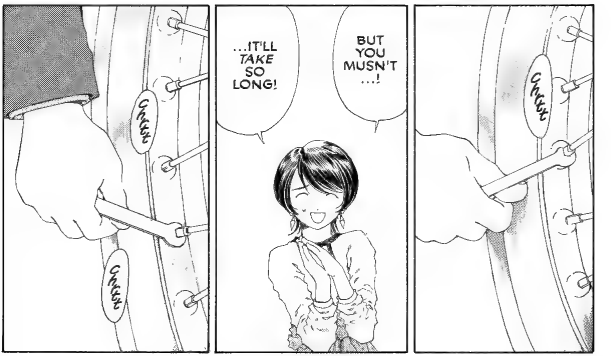

KCHAK


HRBBB
HRBB

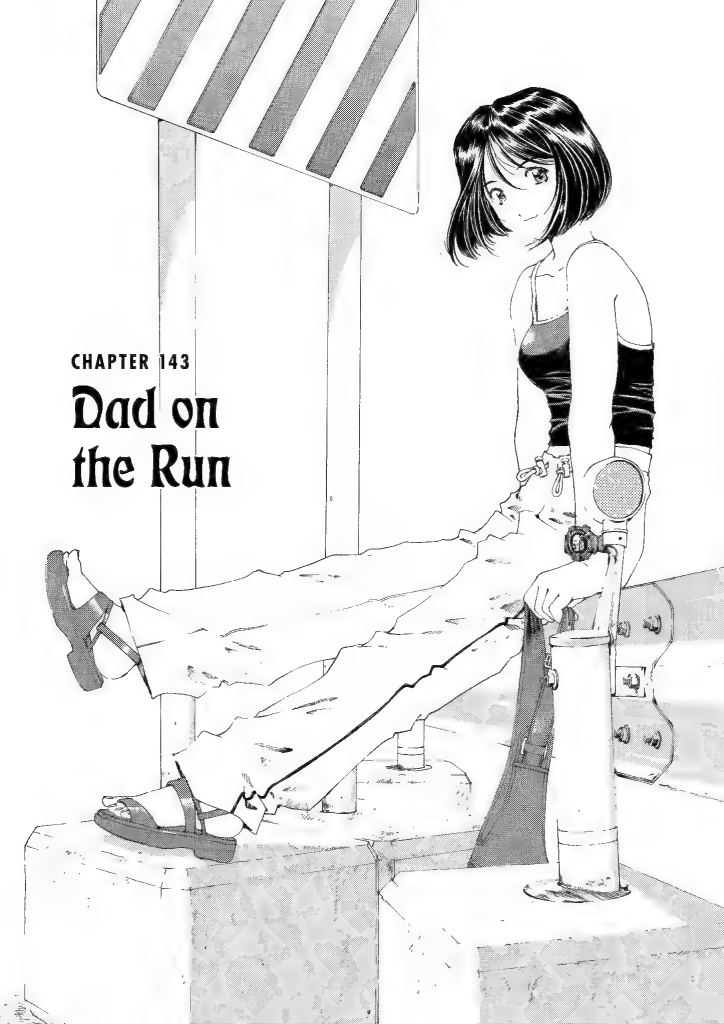
er...
UH... YOU DON'T HAVE TO...
CHNG
TNK
TNG
OH! I JUST GOT THE SPOKES IN. IT'S NOT...
#1--
THANK YOU.
FOR A DELICIOUS LUNCH.
um, yeah.
--TOO CLOSE.


THAT'S #2.
APOLOGY.


...BOTH OF YOU.
I UNDER-ESTIMATED...

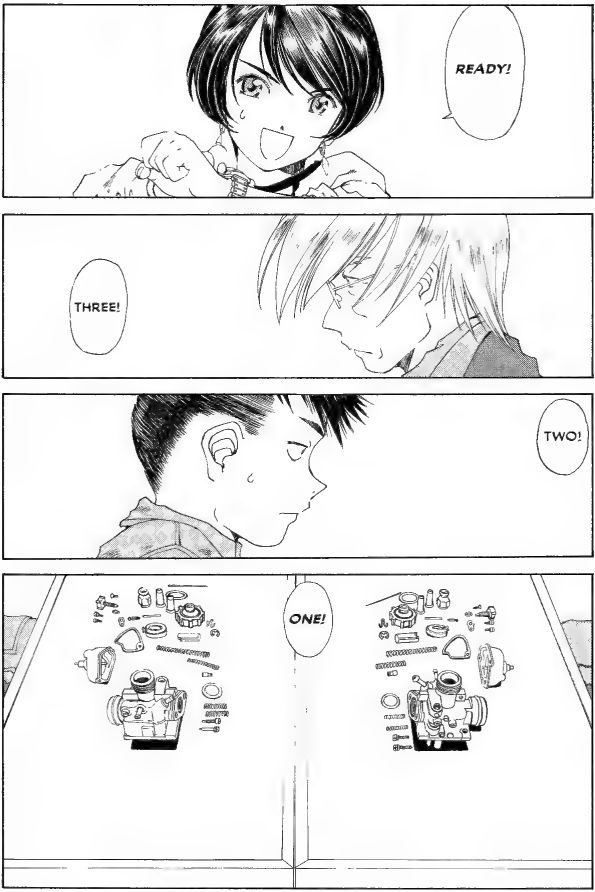

CHUGU
CHUGU
...IT'LL TAKE SO LONG!
BUT YOU MUSN'T ...!
CHUGU

END CHAPTER 142

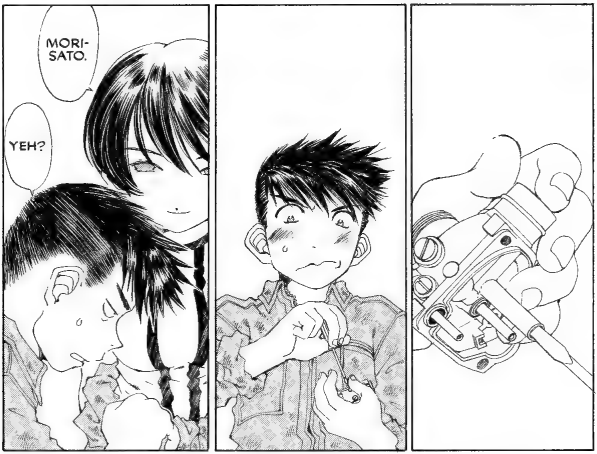


CHAPTER 143

Dad on the Run


READY!
THREE!
TWO!
ONE!

GO!!
AND!


MORI-
SATO.
YEH?

GET BUSY!
MATCH.
GAME, SET.
SKREH SKKSHA
WOW
TRIDENT

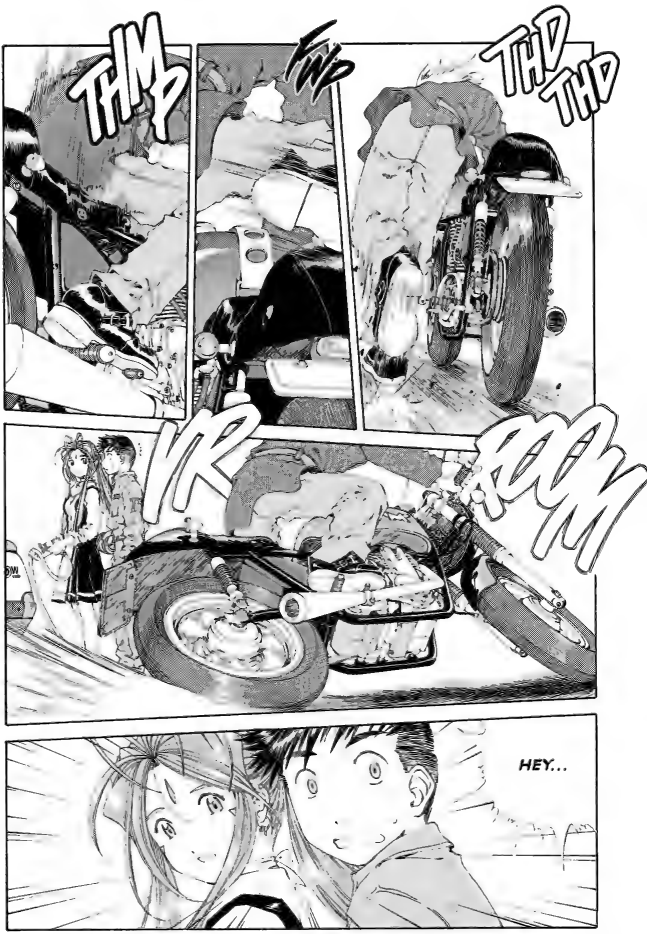
AH!
KEIICHI?
MAY I HELP YOU?
UH... MM...
SURE!
THANKS.

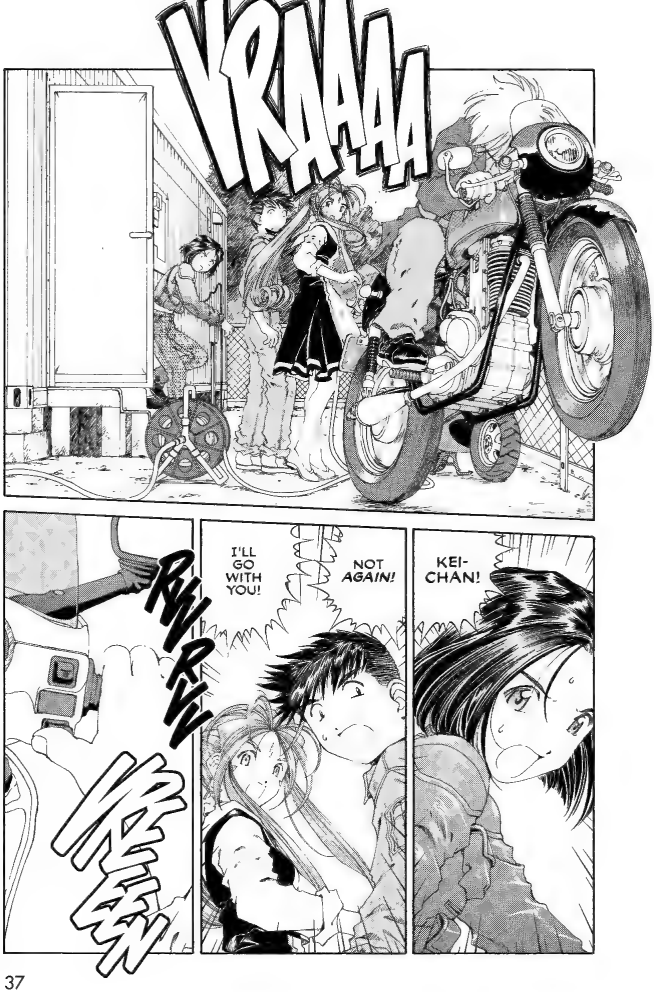
THERE'S HELP AND THEN THERE'S *HELP.*
HEH.

KEIICHI'S FOUND A GOOD WORK-PLACE.
...
WERE YOU WORRIED ABOUT HIM?
WORRIED?

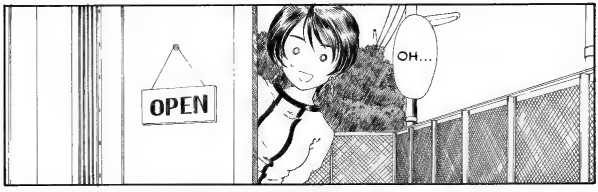
HE'S MY SON.
NEVER.
FWAP FWAP FWAP
YOU! ARE! SO! KEWWWL!
OOH! OOH!

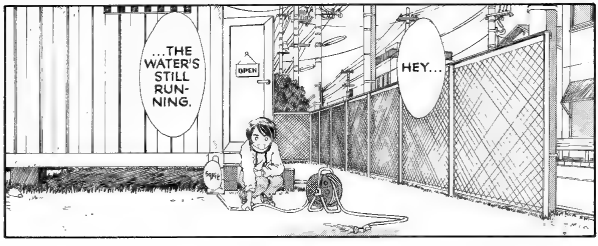
huh?
CHIHIRO! DON'T TOUCH--
WHA--
HUH?
WHOOSH


THMP
FWP
THD THD
VR
ROOM
HEY...


VRAAAA
KEI-CHAN!
NOT AGAIN!
I'LL GO WITH YOU!
BURU BURU

BRAAAAA
WOW
PIAGGIO


OPEN
OH...

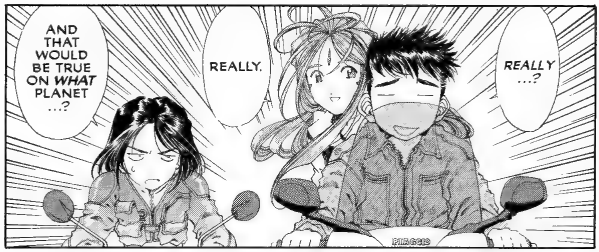

...THE WATER'S STILL RUN-NING.
OPEN
HEY...

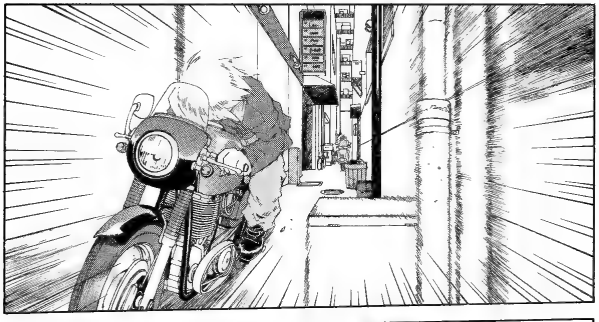
SACARI
FWSSH
RRRR
BMMM
KEEE

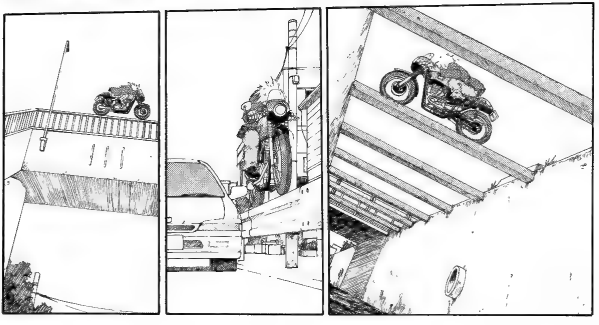
THIS IS HOW HE SHOOK ME *BEFORE!*
IT'S ALL I CAN DO TO KEEP *UP* WITH HIM!
I'VE *NEVER* OVERTAKEN HIM! NOT *ONCE!*
THERE'S NO WAY YOU COULD *OVERTAKE* HIM...

...AFTER ALL...
...HE RIDES JUST LIKE YOU.

HE'S BEAUTI-FUL...

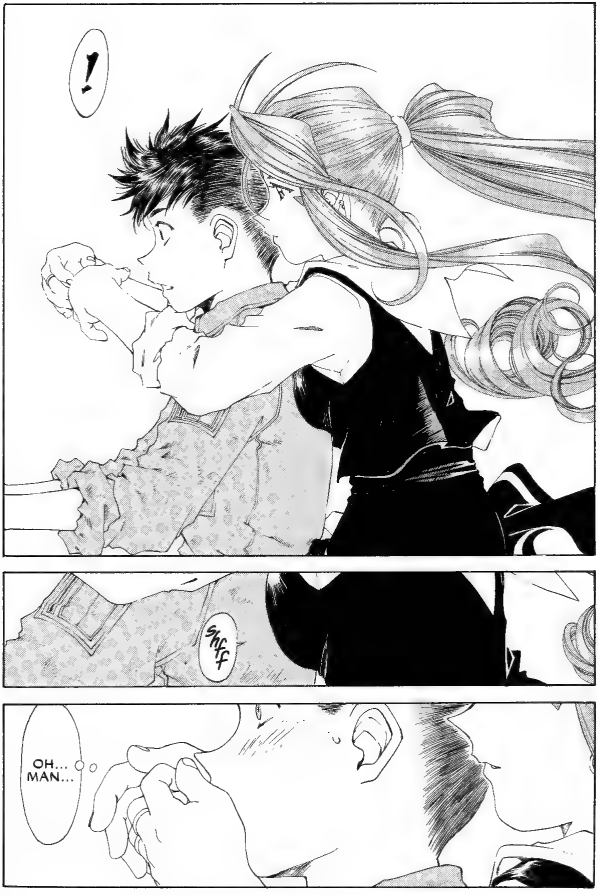

AND THAT WOULD BE TRUE ON *WHAT* PLANET ...?
REALLY.
REALLY ...?
PIRACIS





KEI-CHAN...
...YOU KNOW THERE'S *ONLY ONE WAY.*
YOU THINK?
THAT'S SOME CRAZY RIDING. WE NEED TO STOP HIM.
HOW *CAN* YOU STOP HIM?
ME?
DO I *HAVE* TO?
C'MON... HE'LL NEVER EVEN HEAR ME.

huh?
I'LL MAKE SURE HE HEARS YOU!
IS IT BETTER HE DOESN'T?
I... uh... OKAY.
Bearer of Breezes, "WHISPER."
Thou WIND DANCER Stirrer of the BLUE!


!
SHCF
OH... MAN...

...THANKS SO MUCH FOR RUNNING, KEIMA.
PIAGGIO
WHAT IS SHE DOING...?
some kind of charm?
....
WHEN I TAKE AWAY MY HANDS, SHOUT.

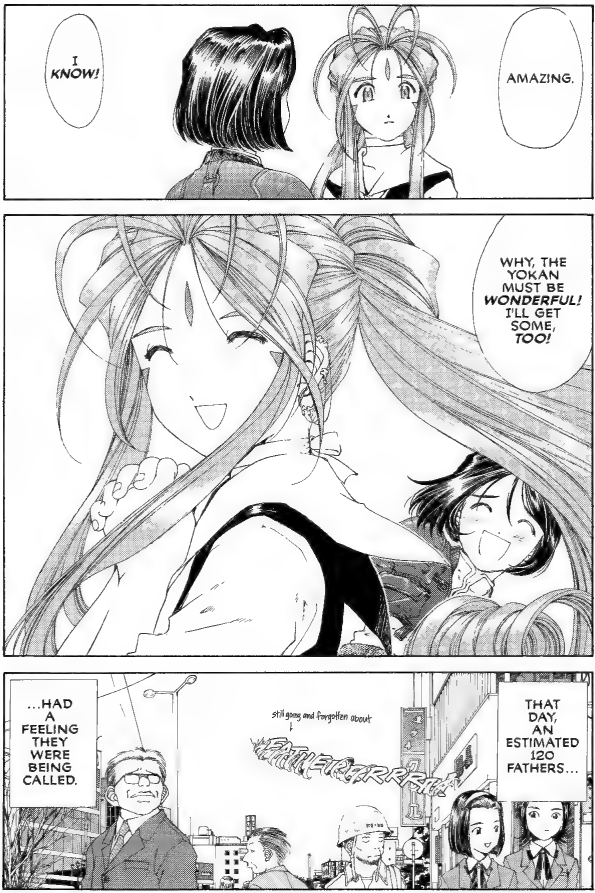
FATHER!
FATHER!

FATHER?!
hm?
FATHER?!
SKRRT
SKREEEEEECH

DON'T CALL ME FATHER!
dook!
WORKS EVERY TIME...

ha?
WELL, KEIICHI...
...YOUR FATHER...
...WAIT. WHY *DID* HE COME HERE, ANYWAY ...?
...NOW YOU KNOW WHY I WAS HESITANT.
ABOUT 4:48--
MEGUMI! WHAT *TIME* IS IT?
dash
OH!

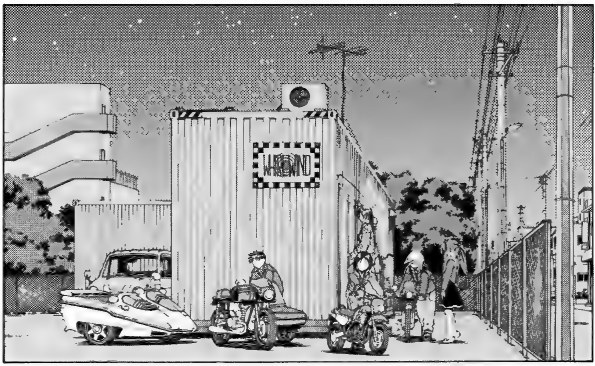
ICEEEN
BRAAAINBRAIN
NOT AGAIN!
SEE, BELLDANDY? THAT'S HOW KEIMA IS.
YOU BOUGHT IT BECAUSE TAKANO ASKED YOU?
SWEETS
LIMIT 3 PER CUSTOMER
OPEN AT 5:00
YOKAN?


I KNOW!
AMAZING.
WHY, THE YOKAN MUST BE WONDERFUL! I'LL GET SOME, TOO!
...HAD A FEELING THEY WERE BEING CALLED.
still going and forgotten about
THAT DAY, AN ESTIMATED 120 FATHERS...

END CHAPTER 143

CHAPTER 144

Garden of the Goddesses

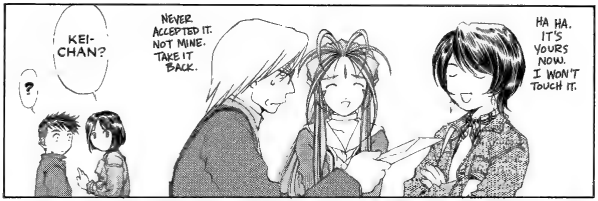

KEIMA

YOU WERE A BIG HELP TODAY, KEIMA.
WELL...
NO.

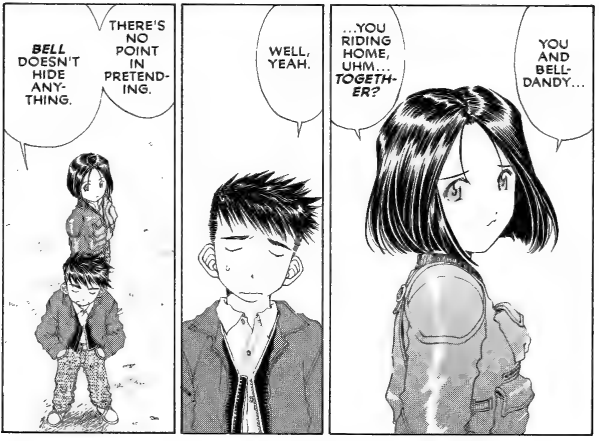
OH!

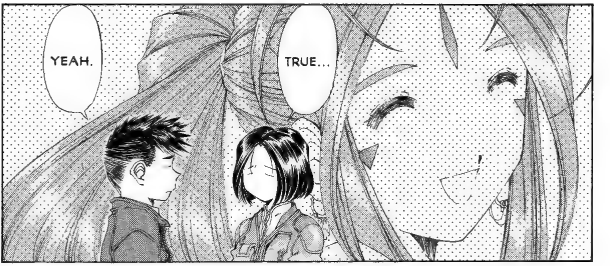
PLEASE ACCEPT THIS WITH MY THANKS!
DON'T NEED IT.
DIDN'T DO IT FOR MONEY.
IT'S JUST A TOKEN OF MY FEELINGS.
REAL FEELINGS DON'T NEED TOKENS!
LOOK... I'M A CRAFTSMAN, TOO.
AND CRAFTSMEN DON'T EXPLOIT THEIR FELLOW CRAFTSMEN.

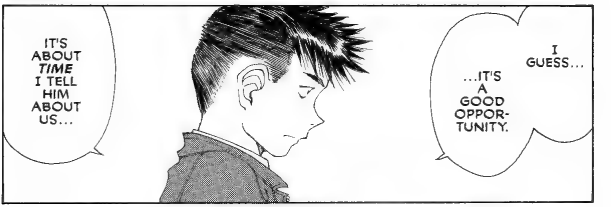
...
I INSIST! TAKE IT! I'LL TOUCH YOU!
DON'T WANT IT! STOP! TOO CLOSE!
PFT
AH?
FWIP
THAP

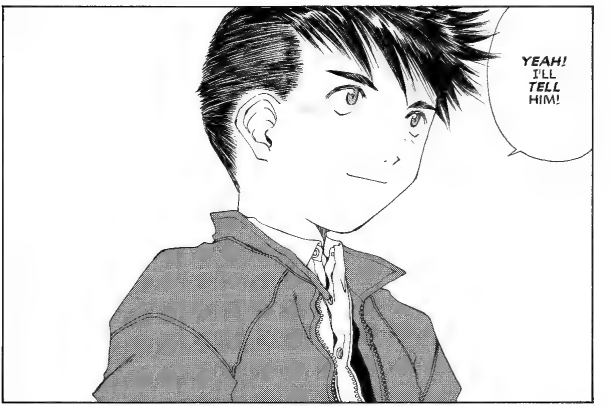

KEI-CHAN?
?
NEVER ACCEPTED IT. NOT MINE. TAKE IT BACK.
HA HA. IT'S YOURS NOW. I WON'T TOUCH IT.

WHAT?


BELL DOESN'T HIDE ANY-THING.
THERE'S NO POINT IN PRETEND-ING.
WELL, YEAH.
...YOU RIDING HOME, UHM... TOGETH-ER?
YOU AND BELL-DANDY...


YEAH.
TRUE...


IT'S ABOUT *TIME* I TELL HIM ABOUT US...
I GUESS...
...IT'S A GOOD OPPORTUNITY.


YEAH! I'LL *TELL* HIM!

THAT WAS SO... MANLY.
...WHAT?
WOW...
...
WHATEVER!
AH-HA-HA-HA! I MEAN THE GODDESS-LIKE WOMEN WHO HANG AROUND ME!
--WHY, WHAT'LL KEIMA THINK?!
??
"GODDESSES"?
BUT WHAT I'M WORRIED ABOUT... IS THE REST OF THE GODDESSES.

I COULD ASK THEM TO MOVE OUT...
OH, COME ON, KEI-CHAN YOU'RE NOT THAT MANLY!
sigh
DON'T RUB IT IN.
WHERE'S KEIMA?
HE WENT ON AHEAD

YOUR PLACE, MORISATO. WHERE ELSE?
AHEAD? TO WHERE?
NOT I!
MEGUMI! DID YOU GIVE HIM OUR ADDRESS?
I DREW HIM A MAP.
WAS THAT... BAD?
OH, YES, AND...
...I GAVE HIM DETAILED DIREC-TIONS.
ah ha ha ha
CHUCK!

RUMBLE
THAT'S IT.

I THOUGHT NO ONE WAS HOME...?
SHUT *UP!* I DID *TOO* HEAR A BIKE!
THESE *EARS* ARE *PERFECT!*
WELL, I'VE GOT A *SEISMIC TRACK!*

ahem. I'VE ANALYZED THE SINE WAVE...
...AND IT'S FOOTSEPS. ON GARDEN ROCKS.
SOME-ONE IN THE GARDEN ?!
COULD BE A CAT.
YK!
CAT? MA CHIENNE! COME BACK HERE AND LOSE ALEADY! MY SHOW'S STARTING!
WHY ARE YOU STILL HERE?
SANS FOYER. WHERE WILL I GO?
SOME-WHERE ELSE?
CAN'T... DO THIS...

WHO ARE YOU?
HEY, MISTER.
AN AGENT, YES? A TOOL OF DEMONS?!
AM I RIGHT?
AN INTRUDER, YES?
...SHE SCRAMBLED MY BRAIN WITH A MAGNETIC STORM.
WHEN THAT WICKED HILD CAME AROUND, I WAS HELPLESS...

BUT NOT TODAY!
EXCUSE ME, LITTLE GIRL...
...WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
!!
ROCKET PUNCH!

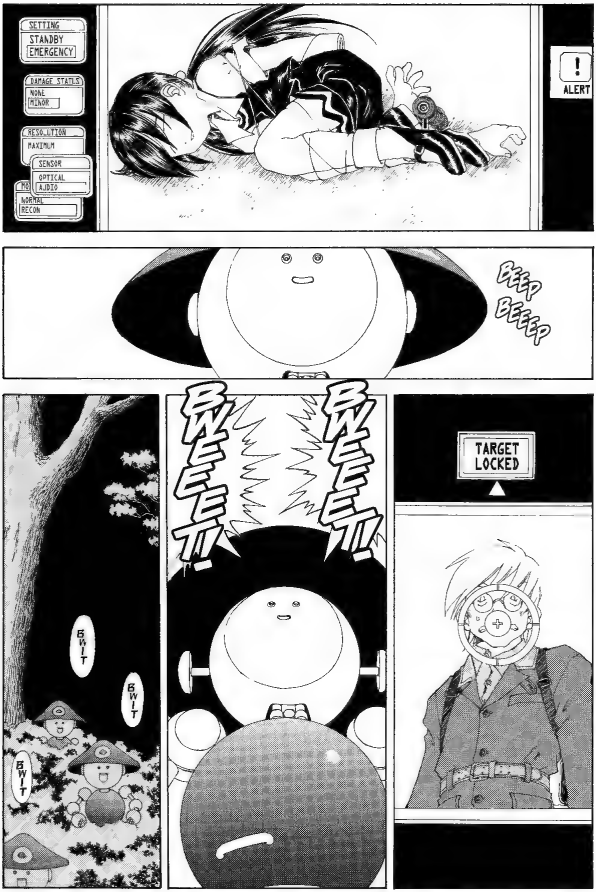
EH?!
WHOOM
WEEEE
SHUK

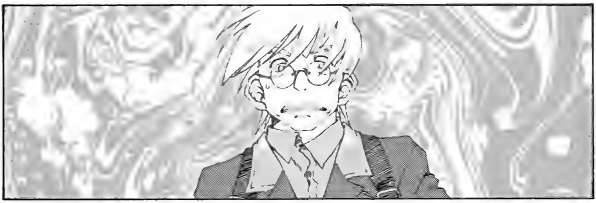
AH ?!
SHSSK
KICK!

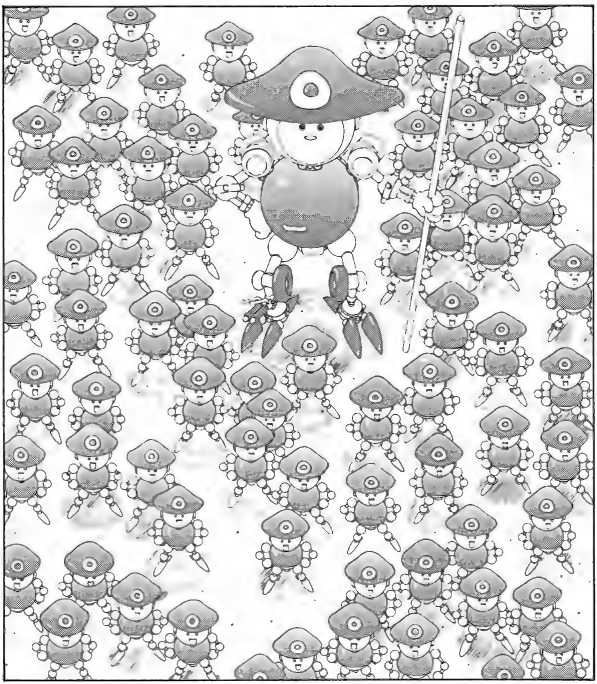
WHOOSH
SNAP

TOUGH GUY, eh?
HM?
SHIKI!
AH!
FWT
FWT

HELLLP
MEEE
?
?
?
!!
KSHONGG
KSHONGG
KSHONGG
VREE


SETTING
STANDBY
EMERGENCY
DAMAGE STATUS
NONE
MINOR
RESOLUTION
MAXIMUM
SENSOR
ON
OPTICAL
RADIO
NORMAL
RECON
!
ALERT
BEEP
BEEEP
BWEEE!!
BWEEE!!
TARGET
LOCKED
BWIT
BWIT
BWIT

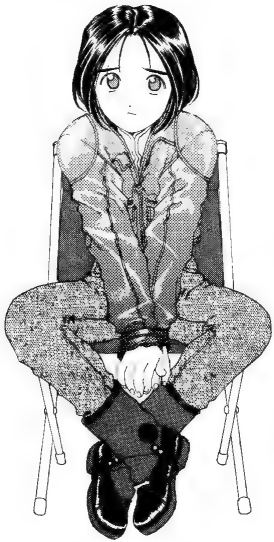




END CHAPTER 144

OH MY GODDESS!

MEGUMI



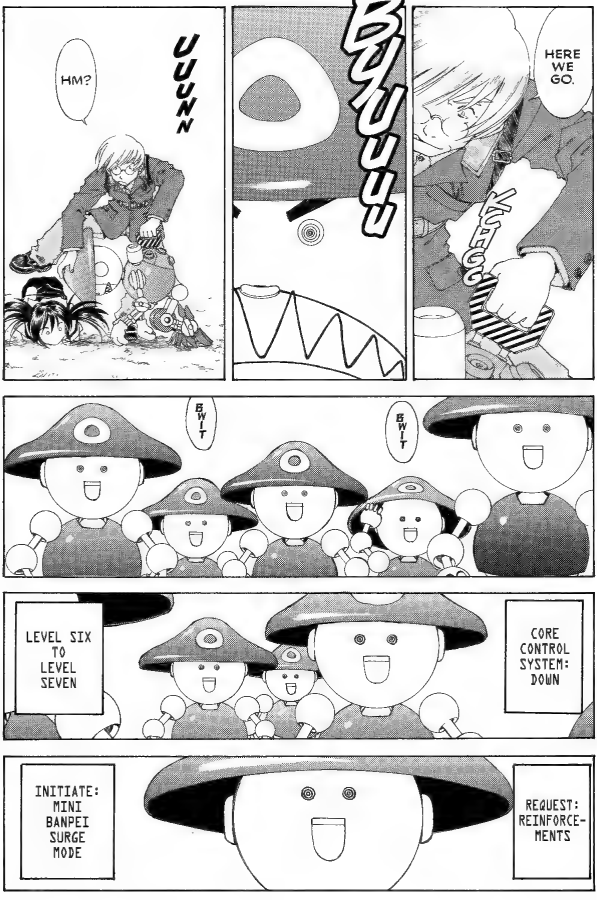
CHAPTER 145

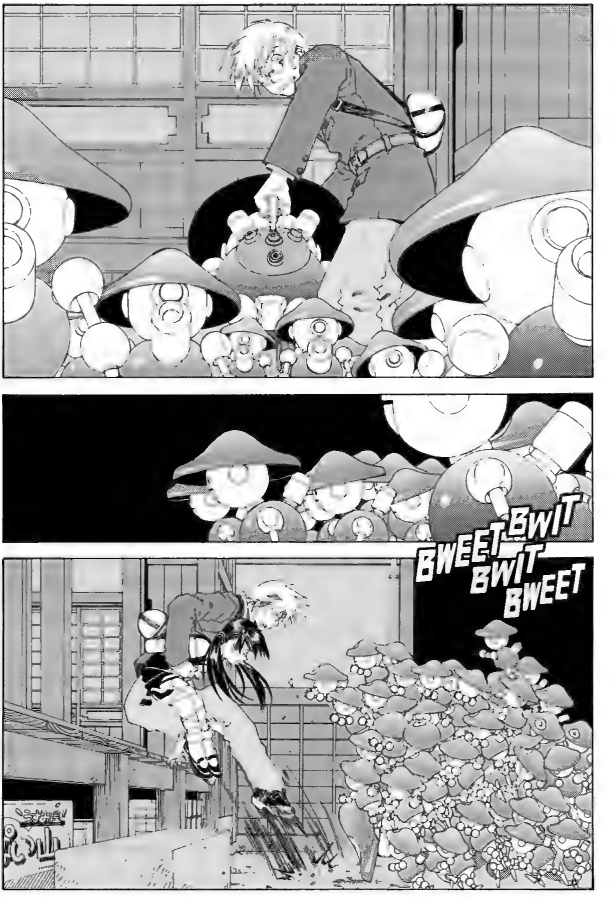
Dad in Hell

IS IT ANGRY ...?
WHAT? BECAUSE OF THIS DOLL ...?
this doll
VERY ANGRY.
KSHHHGG

THUD
KRRAAASH!!
BANPEI!
EEK!

YOU CAUGHT BANPEI!
HUH?
YOU... OKAY?
...A DEMON?...
YOU'RE NOT...


UUUNN
HM?
BUUUU
HERE WE GO.
KACHAK
BWIT
BWIT
LEVEL SIX TO LEVEL SEVEN
CORE CONTROL SYSTEM: DOWN
INITIATE: MINI BANPEI SURGE MODE
REQUEST: REINFORCE-MENTS


BWEET-BWIT
BWIT
BWEET

HA!!
WHAT KIND OF PLACE IS KEIICHI--
SHUT UP! WE CAN'T HEAR THE TV!

?
KBMD
SKULD! IT'S YOUR TURN!
THMP THMP
?

ZUT ALORS! ACCÉLÉREZ, OR I'LL CHOOSE.
KTHMP
WABUMP
KTHMP
QUI ES-TU?

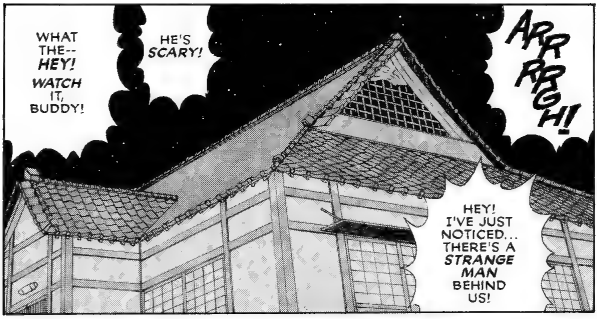
THEY'RE ON INDISCRIMINATE ATTACK MODE.
UM.

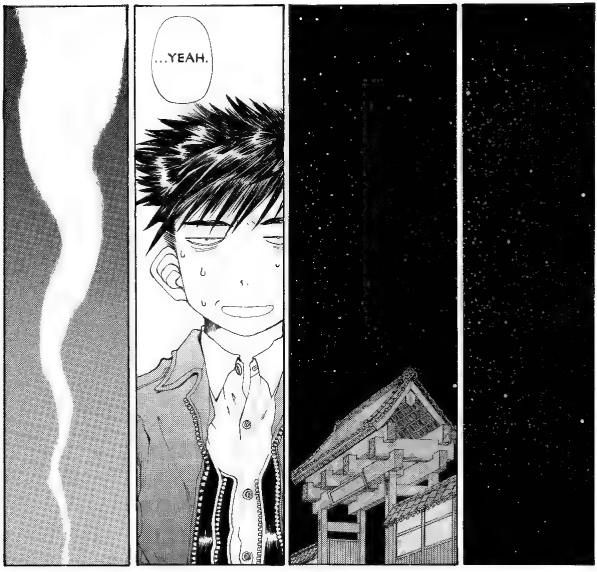
YEEEAAA!
THE HALL-WAY!
YEEEAAA!
THE ATTIC!
YEEEAAA!
QUICK! INTO MY ROOM--
--IT'S STUCK!

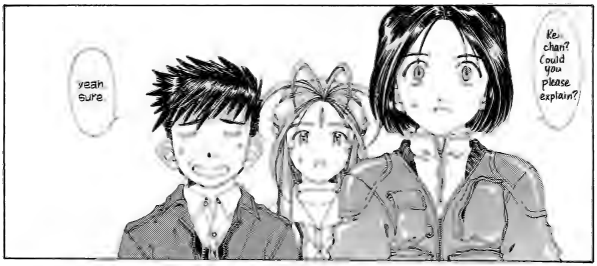
...ALL THE MINI-BANPEI UNITS GO INTO A SURGE ASSAULT.
WELL, YOU SEE, IF BANPEI'S POWERED DOWN DURING A LEVEL 6 ALERT...
WELL, I DUNNO WHY, URD... I JUST *DID*.
UH-HUH. AND WHY'D YOU DESIGN THAT INTO HIS PROGRAM, AGAIN?
BUT THEY'LL ***GET*** ME!
THEN ***DO*** IT, DUMMY!
--DO YOU *STOP* THEM? UM, YOU *CAN'T*. THE ONLY WAY IS TO RE-START BANPEI ***HIMSELF!***
OKAY, NEVER MIND THE "WHY." ON TO THE ***"HOW"***--

FARE-WELL, DEAR CHILD!
SACRE BLEU! ME DEUX!
I'LL JUST TELEPORT MYSELF OUT OF HERE!
OH, WAIT. WHY AM I WORRIED?
?
!
NOOOOO!
PLEASE DON'T LEAVE ME HERE!

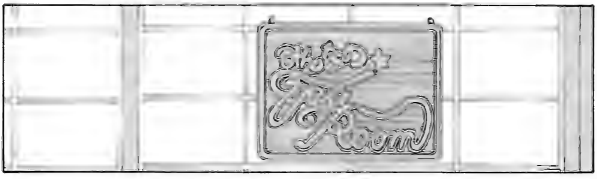
I CAN'T TELEPORT WITHOUT WATER! IT'S NOT FAIR! PLEASE DON'T GO YOU GUYS PLEASE!
BABUMP
SKULD, I WAS JOKING!
SKULD, WE'LL JUST BE A MOMENT. WE'VE GOT TO GO RE-BOOT BANPEI...
BABUMP
KTHMP
NO! YOU'RE ALL GOING TO LEAVE ME! YOU'RE GONNA--
BABUMP KATHUMP
BABUMP BABUMP
GRRRR


WHAT THE-- HEY! WATCH IT, BUDDY!
HE'S SCARY!
ARRRRGH!
HEY! I'VE JUST NOTICED... THERE'S A STRANGE MAN BEHIND US!


...YEAH.


yeah, sure.
Ke-chan? Could you please explain?

IT'S HIGH-SPIRITED FUN, MEGUMI!

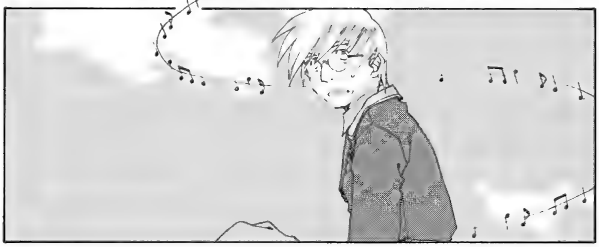

Bath Room

HOW TRAGIC.
...IS PLEASE GIVE THE MAN HIS SPACE.
...SO... ALL I ASK IN CONCLUSION...
RECTAFLEX
DON'T WORRY-- HE CAN BE CURED!
ALL I ASK! I SAID, THAT'S ALL I ASK!
RECTAFLEX

ANYWAY... WHAT D'YOU THINK KEIMA REALLY CAME ALL THE WAY DOWN... *HERE* FOR?
BEATS ME.
...WHAT?
KEI-CHAN...
NO. THEY SORT OF MULTI-PLIED.
And so scantily clad?
DID YOU ALWAYS HAVE SO MANY GIRLS HERE?
VRMMMM
WELL, THIS MUST BE... *HERE*.

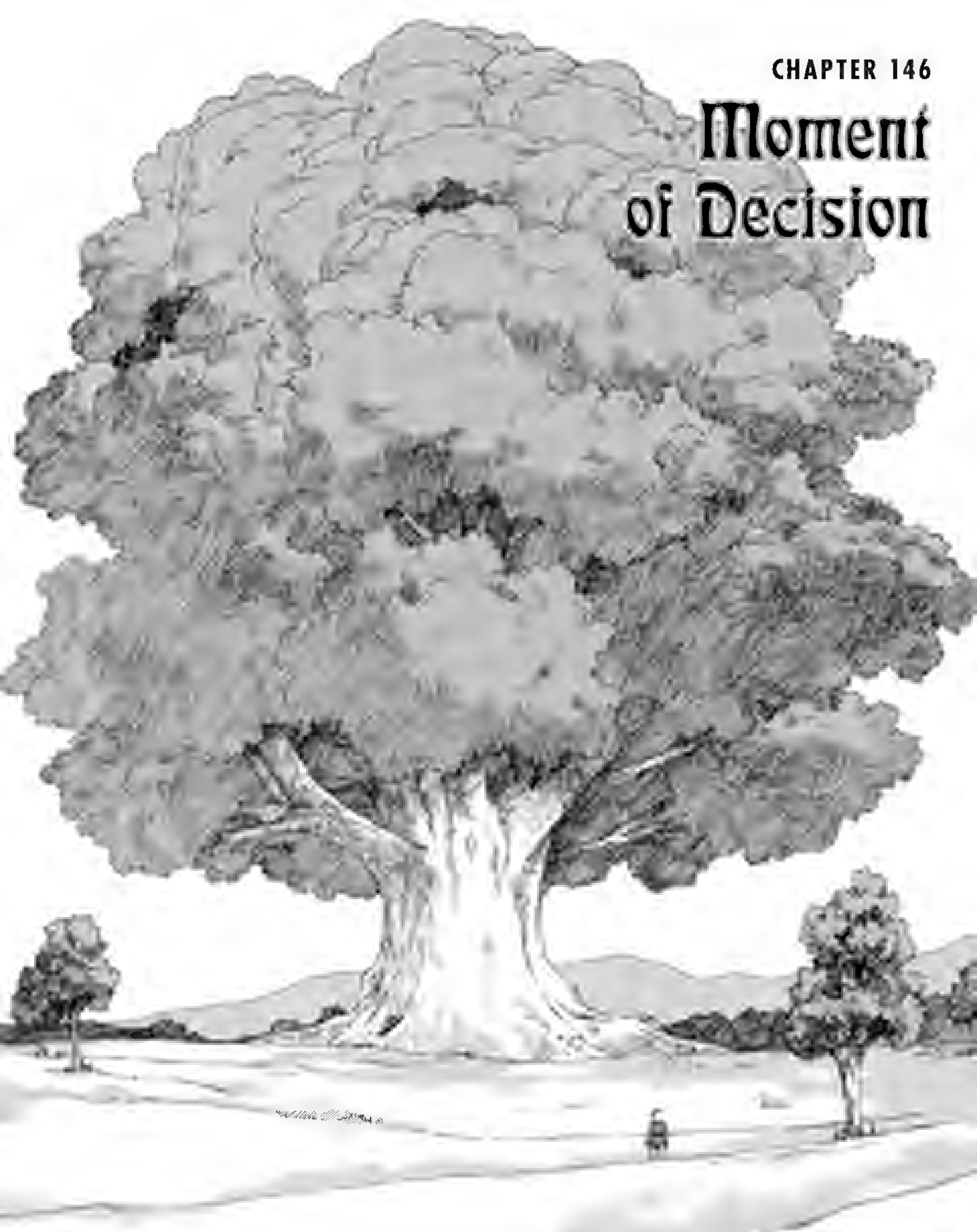
OH MY GODDESS!

TAKANO

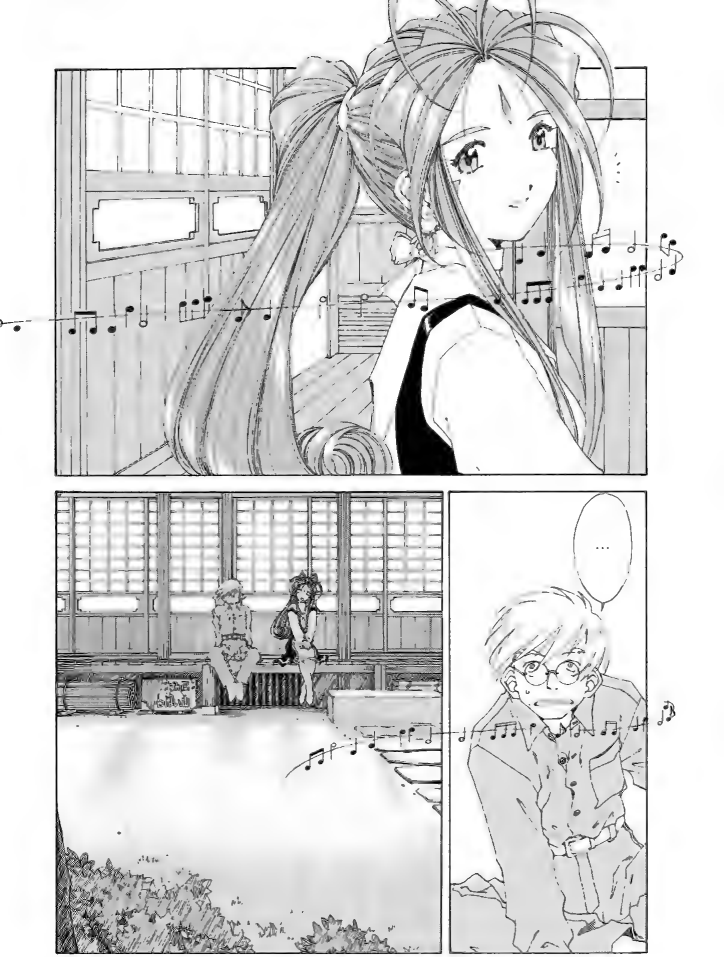


CHAPTER 146

Moment of Decision



A DREAM...



ARE YOU...?
...YES?
OH...
...NOTHING.
....
KEIICHI SEEMS QUITE FOND OF YOU.

KEIICHI LOVES ME.
I LOVE HIM, TOO.
KTMP!
THIS GIRL...
Ktmp Ktmp
I... ...MADE HIM A PROMISE.

I TOLD HIM I'D NEVER LEAVE HIS SIDE.
...DID YOU?
WILL YOU WALK WITH HIM FOR ME?

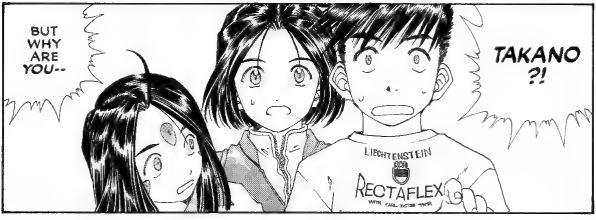
UNTIL THE END.
YES.

...
...THANK YOU.
NOW.
ABOUT THOSE *OTHER* THREE...
KSHAM

LEAVE HIM TO MOI!
I'M READY!
PERFEC-TION!
OOPS--

GRRR
KISS!

WHAT A LIVELY LITTLE PLACE YOU GOT HERE, KEIICHI.
GLASS
CAT


BUT WHY ARE *YOU*--
TAKANO ?!
LIECHTENSTEIN
RECTAFLEX

...THE LITTLE *PRESENT* I GOT YOU.
BECAUSE KEIMA *FORGOT*...

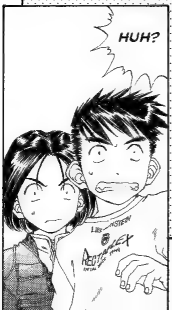
I TOLD HIM IT WOULD ONLY KEEP A DAY.
ah-heh-ha-ha
GLASS CAT
NOW...
...WHAT'S GOING ON HERE?
UH.
HUM.
INUKI

EXPLAIN ...?
YEAH.
LIECHTENSTEIN

...CAN I POSSIBLY EX-PLAIN?
HOW...

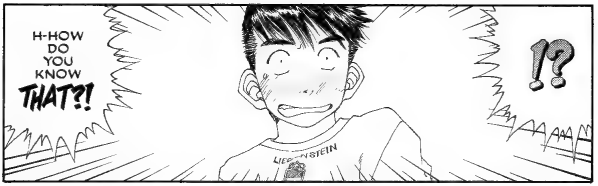
...WRITE HER OUT A PLOT SUMMARY!
I'D HAVE TO...

SHACK
AH GOT IT!

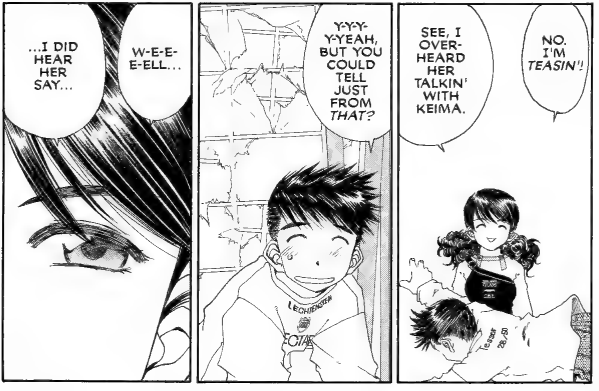

HUH?

Y'ALL ARE RUNNIN' A MONAS-TERY.
NO SHAVED HEADS.
OH YEAH.
HERE WE GO.
JUST LIKE ALWAYS.
WHAT ARE YOU TALK-ING ABOUT?
THERE'S ICHINOSE... AN' THERE'S YOTSUYA... AN THERE'S KOPPONG!
IT'S A BOARDIN' HOUSE, AN' SHE'S THE BEAUTEOUS MANAGER.
HOW 'BOUT THIS?
AH...
YES?
WAIT... DON'T TELL ME. THEY'RE ALL YOUR GIRL-FRIENDS.
NO?
SORRY.

PLEASED TO MEET YOU.
I'M BELL-DANDY.
THE PLEASURE'S MINE. AH'M TAKANO.
OH! FOR YOU!
EAT IT QUICK-- IT'S SPOILIN'
THANK YOU SO MUCH!
HMM.
AN' YOU MUST BE...
..THE GIRL KEIICHI LOVES.


H-HOW DO YOU KNOW THAT?!
!?

I'M YOUR MOM.
HOW DO I KNOW?


...I DID HEAR HER SAY...
W-E-E-E-ELL...
Y-Y-Y-Y-YEAH, BUT YOU COULD TELL JUST FROM THAT?
SEE, I OVER-HEARD HER TALKIN' WITH KEIMA.
NO. I'M TEASIN'!

"...UNTIL THE END."
KEIICHI. WOULD YOU PROTECT THIS GIRL WITH *YOUR* LIFE?
AN' SO.
GLASS FACTORY
GLASS CAT

END CHAPTER 146

CHAPTER 147

Mother's Battle, Father's Battle

YOU GONNA DO IT?
WELL?
YEAH, SURE.
LIECHTENSTEIN
ECTAFLEX
!
LIECHTENSTEIN
RECTAFLEX
LIECHTENSTEIN
RECTAFLEX

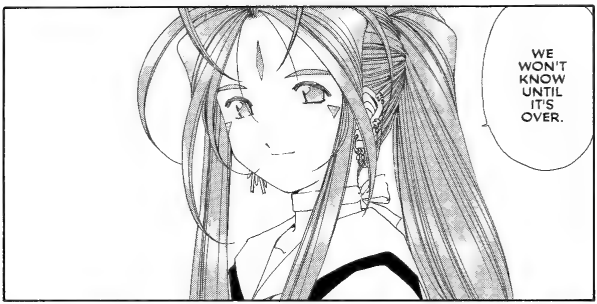
OH. COULD Y'ALL PLEASE...?
BUT, SEE, THERE'S THIS PROBLEM. MY BIKE'S GOT A SIDECAR, AND...
RECTAFLEX
IT'S NOT BALANCED FOR A SINGLE RIDER, AND...
BUT IT'S NOT THAT SIMPLE. THERE'S THE LITTLE MATTER OF THE SUSPEN-SION...
OKAY, SO IT COMES OFF...
RECTAFLEX

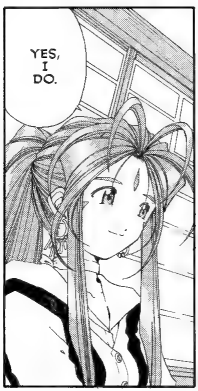
HMMM...
HMMM...
KEIICHI, IS SOW OKAY?
YEAH, YEAH.

BUT THIS TIME I'LL WIN.
Panasonic
SORRY.
SAY THAT AFTER YOU'VE PASSED ME EVEN ONCE.
YOU KEEP *COUNT?*
NINETY-SEVEN TIMES.
LET'S SEE, SINCE THE DAYS OF YOUR FIRST BICYCLE, YOU'VE LOST...

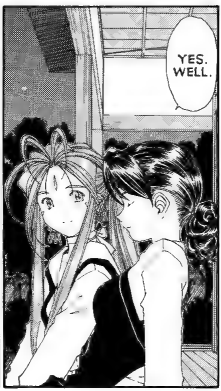
BE-
CAUSE...
OH?
WHY
IS
THAT?
I AIN'T
SAYIN'
I'M HAPPY
'BOUT IT...
BUT KEIICHI,
NOW....HE
IS GONNA
LOSE.
...IS
INVINCIBLE.
...MY
KEIMA...

MS. TAKANO?
HM?


WE WON'T KNOW UNTIL IT'S OVER.


YES, I DO.

SAY, YOU BELIEVE IN KEIICHI THAT MUCH?


YES. WELL.

JUST BECAUSE THINGS DON'T END AS YOU HOPE...
FAITH ISN'T ABOUT OUT-COMES.
WELL, THEN...IT'S GONNA BE A SHOCKER WHEN HE DON'T COME THROUGH.
...DOESN'T MEAN YOU'VE BEEN BETRAYED.

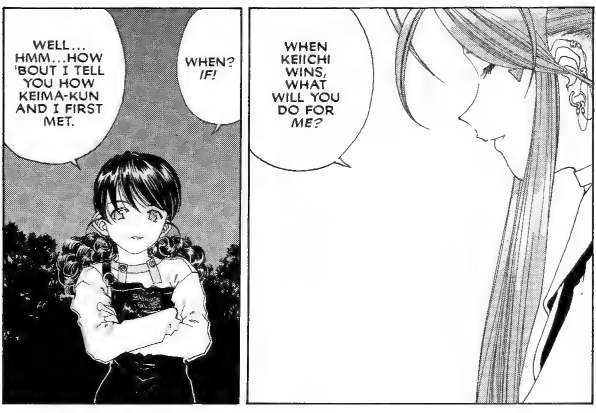
WELL, NOW...
...GUESS YOU MIGHT BE RIGHT, AT THAT.
WANNA PUT DOWN A SIDE BET, THEN?

WHAT KIND?
IF KEIMA WINS, TELL ME.
I MEAN, WHO YOU REALLY ARE.

NOW DON'T GET ME WRONG.
IT AIN'T THAT I DON'T LIKE YOU, STRANGER.

HIS WIFE, AND HIS DAUGHTER.
THERE'S ONLY BEEN TWO WOMEN WHO COULD EVER GET WITHIN A *METER* OF THE MAN BEFORE.
BUT...

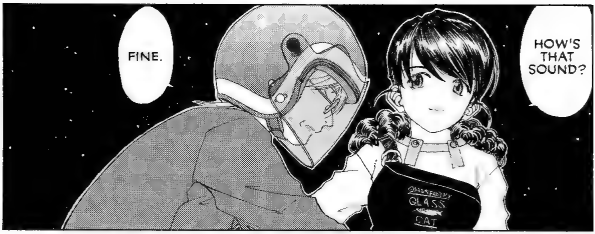
...I JUST WANT T'KNOW WHAT *YOU'RE* ALL ABOUT.
SO, MISS NUMBER THREE...

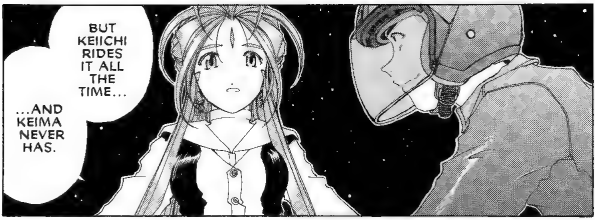

WELL... HMM...HOW 'BOUT I TELL YOU HOW KEIMA-KUN AND I FIRST MET.
WHEN? *IF!*
WHEN KEIICHI WINS, WHAT WILL YOU DO FOR *ME?*

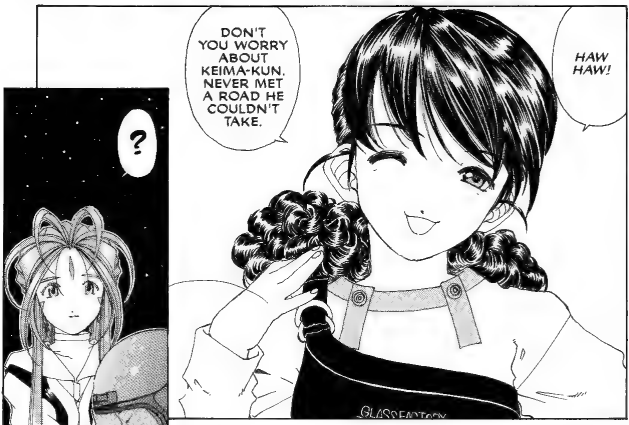
IT'S A BIT UNEVEN, THIS BET.
REALLY? IT'S *TOP-NOTCH*, THIS STORY! NEVER BEEN TOLD.
...DON'T WANNA DO IT?
NO, I'LL TAKE THE WAGER.
I'D LOVE TO HEAR YOUR STORY.

DRM DRM DRM
Y'KNOW, THAT GIRL'S REALLY SOMETHIN'!
YEAH! READY TO ROLL!
GLASS CAT
DRMMBBB
BRMBBBB

IT'S THE WAY TO NEKOMI'S OTHER CAMPUS.
IT GOES THROUGH THIS PASS IN THE HILLS.
THE INOKU-RADAI CIRCUIT, I GUESS.
SO... WHERE'S A GOOD PLACE?
OH... NO... IT'S NOT AN *OFFICIAL* TRACK...
THE HOME-LAND *IS* DIFFERENT.
Y'ALL GOT TRACKS OPEN AT YOUR HOUSE?
EHH ?!


FINE.
HOW'S THAT SOUND?
GLASS CAT

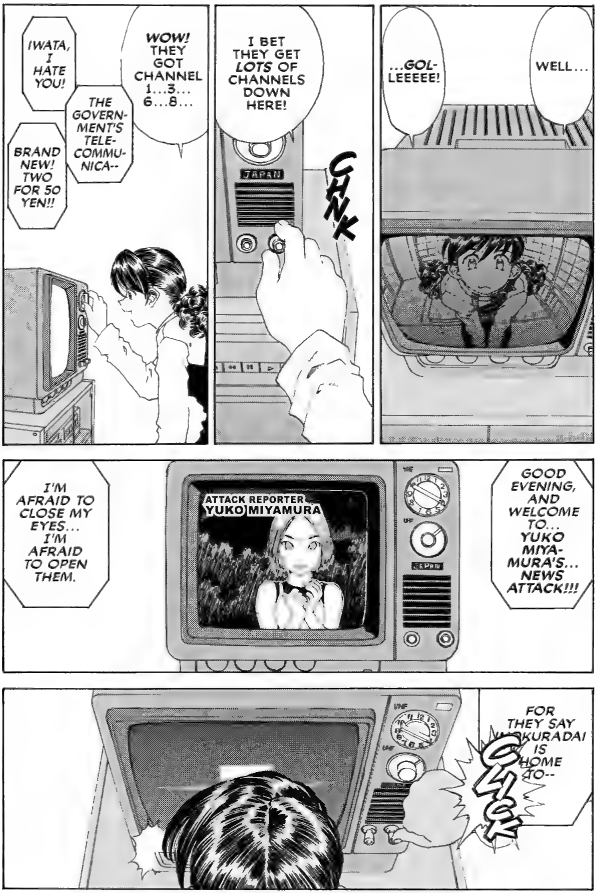

BUT KEIICHI RIDES IT ALL THE TIME...
...AND KEIMA NEVER HAS.

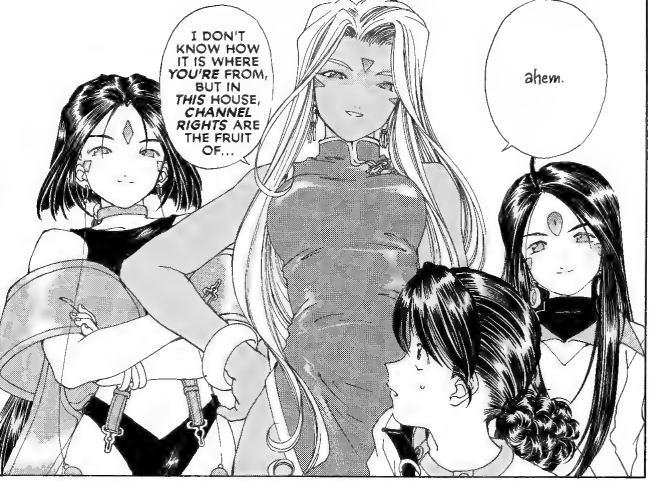

DON'T YOU WORRY ABOUT KEIMA-KUN. NEVER MET A ROAD HE COULDN'T TAKE.
HAW HAW!
?
GLASSFANTOM

DRIVE SAFELY!
HAVE FUN!
BARROOM
VRAWWW
VRRRMMM
DO YOU THINK THEY HEARD THAT LAST PART?

READY, LADIES? LET'S GO!
GO WHERE?
EH... NO-WHERE.
ABORT "PROJECT: USE DIRTY TRICKS TO ASSURE KEIICHI VICTORY."
?

HUH? THEM ONES I ASKED KEIMA TO GET?!?
OH, YES! WHY DON'T WE HAVE SOME OF THAT LOVELY YOKAN?
SURE *THANG!*
AND I BOUGHT SOME, TOO.
ooh!
WHY, YES, *MA'AM!*
I'LL SET IT UP IN THE TEA ROOM...


IWATA, I HATE YOU!
THE GOVERNMENT'S TELECOMMUNICA--
BRAND NEW! TWO FOR 50 YEN!!
WOW! THEY GOT CHANNEL 1...3...6...8...
I BET THEY GET LOTS OF CHANNELS DOWN HERE!
JAPAN
CHNK
...GOL-LEEEEE!
WELL...
I'M AFRAID TO CLOSE MY EYES... I'M AFRAID TO OPEN THEM.
ATTACK REPORTER YUKO MIYAMURA
GOOD EVENING, AND WELCOME TO... YUKO MIYAMURA'S... NEWS ATTACK!!!
FOR THEY SAY KURADAI IS HOME TO--
CLICK


I DON'T KNOW HOW IT IS WHERE YOU'RE FROM, BUT IN THIS HOUSE, CHANNEL RIGHTS ARE THE FRUIT OF...
ahem.

...YOU JUST HOLD ON THERE.
WELL, NOW...
HAW HAW

JENGA? UNO? DOBON?
EN GARDE! WHAT SHALL IT BE?

...VICTORY!

KAK-TAK!
SPANK!
WHAM
SO THE GAME, LADIES, IS MAHJONG.
THREE AGAINST ONE EQUALS FOUR.
shikk

SURE!
CAN YOU PLEASE GET THE TEA AND YOKAN?
YOU DON'T PLAY MAHJONG?! Y'ALLS PARENTS RAISE YOU IN A BARN?!
...she brought a set with her.
I can't believe...
WHAT'S THIS? LOOKS LIKE DOMINOES!
OKAY, SEE NOW, YOU'VE GOT ONE JANTO AND FOUR MENTSU...
MM?
MEGUMI?
NOW, IF Y'ALL HOLDIN' TWO TILES OF THE SAME SET AND A PLAYER DISCARDS ONE FROM HIS WALL, YOU CAN GET A PON...
...THAT'S PRETTY SNEAKY, SIS.

END CHAPTER 147

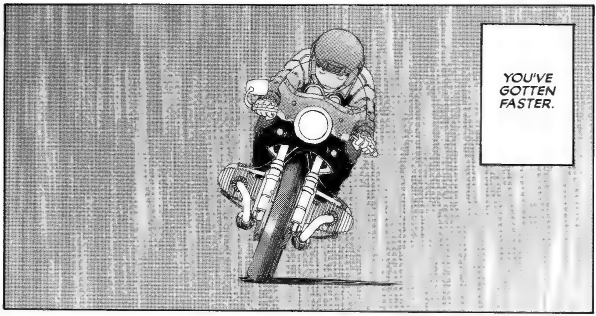
CHAPTER 148

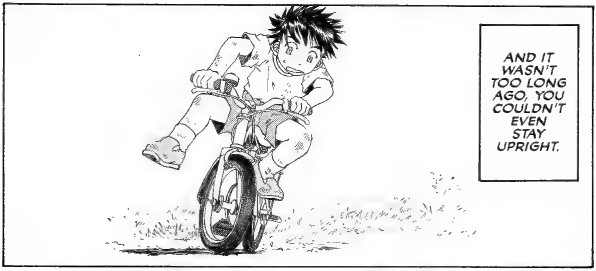
Let's Dance!

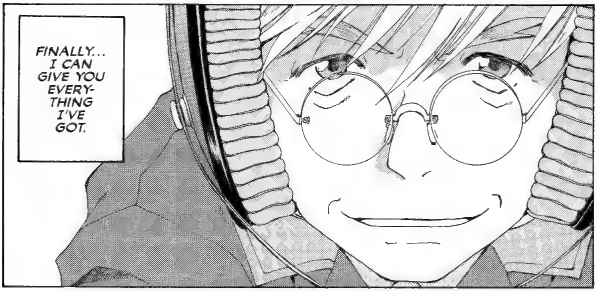
BRMBRMBRM
BRMMBRMMBRMM
DRNDRNDRN
YOU WIN
YOU PASS ME EVEN ONCE...
SOUNDS GOOD.

VRAMMM
VRAMMM
TAP TAP
DRRMMB
DRRMMB
SKEE SKEE SKEE

SHOOM
DRNDRNDRNDRN
KRAMM
BRMMB


YOU'VE GOTTEN FASTER.

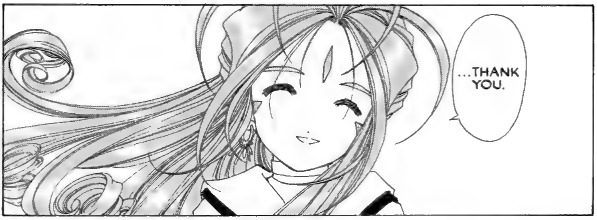

AND IT WASN'T TOO LONG AGO, YOU COULDN'T EVEN STAY UPRIGHT.

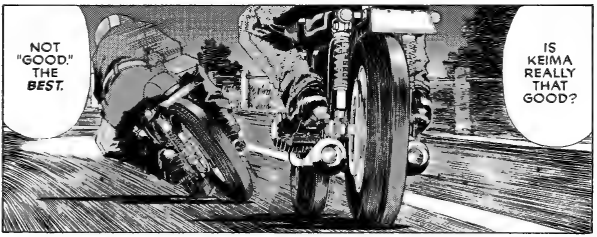

FINALLY... I CAN GIVE YOU EVERY-THING I'VE GOT.

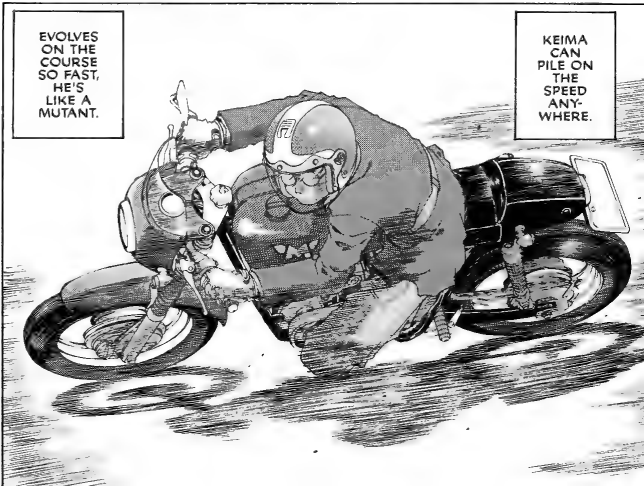
FWOOSH
!!
I KNEW IT WASN'T GOING TO BE EASY...
BUT I DIDN'T KNOW IT WAS GOING TO BE THIS HARD.

...I SHOULDN'T GIVE UP SO EASILY.
BUT SOME LITTLE VOICE TELLS ME...
!
?
?
HEY!
...THE BOY'S SHOWING NEW VIGOR.

I'M SORRY. I SHOULD HAVE...
NO NEED TO APOLOGIZE.
BUT...
I THOUGHT YOU'D WANT TO COME ALONG.


...THANK YOU.


IS KEIMA REALLY THAT GOOD?
NOT "GOOD." THE *BEST.*

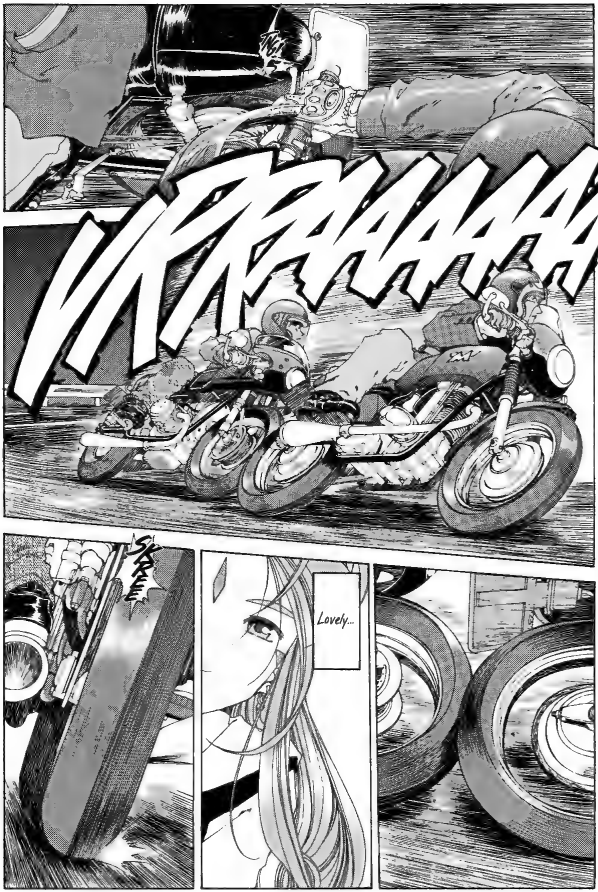

KEIMA CAN PILE ON THE SPEED ANY-WHERE.
EVOLVES ON THE COURSE SO FAST, HE'S LIKE A MUTANT.

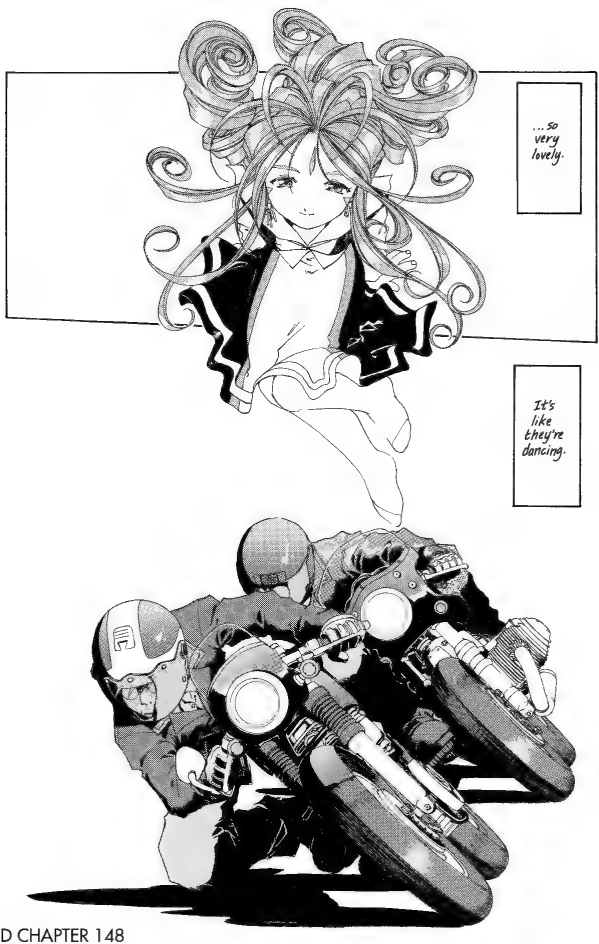
AND THAT GIVES ME A SHOT.
HE DOESN'T KNOW IT AT ALL
I KNOW THIS PASS FROM TOP TO BOTTOM
BUT I'VE GOT *TWO* ADVANTAGES.
I... CAN SHOOT AHEAD IN THAT MOMENT.
IF HE CAN'T READ WHAT'S AHEAD... IF HE HESITATES
IF I DIDN'T THINK I HAD THAT SMALL CHANCE, I WOULD HAVE NEVER AGREED TO THE RACE.
AND THEN I'LL WIN.

WELL, IT MAY SOUND A *LITTLE* UNFAIR, BUT...
AND THE OTHER ADVANTAGE...?
...I'VE GOT A *GODDESS* ON MY SIDE.
LET'S RIP!!

VRAMMM
ON THE OUT-SIDE?!
BRMMM

VROOOOOOOOM
BUT IT'S AN S-CURVE.
urk!
FWOOSH


VROOAAAA
SKREE
Lovely...



END CHAPTER 148

Continued in
***Oh My Goddess!* Vol. 24**

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English-language version
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7.1: The little "pi pi pi" sounds to be seen among the chicks in the background (of the chicks) are the cheeping noises that baby birds make, as the Japanese hear them. Sometimes this sound is also represented as "piyo piyo," which was the design on Kyoko's trademark apron in *Maison Ikkoku*—see note for 116.4.

7.1.5: If this was one of them authentic manga with unretouched Japanese sound effects and a glossary in 4-point type, you'd get plenty of opportunity from me for labored and pedantic explanations of these things. Don't worry—you can always enjoy this feature in Dark Horse's forthcoming *Mail* and *The Kurosagi Corpse Delivery Service*.

14.3: The translator believes Chihiro was trying to impute that Keiichi's dad is gay. Which brings up an interesting point—if you are a *shonen ai* manga fan, what are you going to do when your favorite characters reach some advanced age, like, I dunno, twenty-two? Are you going to be superficial and stop reading their suggestive adventures? Or are you going to be loyal to them, even if they grow up to look like Keima (now we know where Keiichi gets his tense, worried expression from)? Remember that the immortal Oscar Wilde was a pioneer of *oyaji ai*.

17.4: I forgot to mention it in the preceding note, but Keima is not gay. Anyway, on this and the next page, Chihiro is obviously having a hard time believing she heard right that Keima drove down from Kushiro. That's because Kushiro is a prefecture (the Japanese equivalent of states—although that's misleading, as they have less autonomy than U.S. states do, and in size they're quite small; for example, Kushiro is only a little larger than Rhode Island) in the northeast of Hokkaido, one of the four main islands that make up Japan. It's almost as far north from Tokyo as you can go and still be in Japan. With a population of 265,000, only one-quarter of one percent of Japan's population lives in Kushiro; you can check out an English-language page on where Keiichi comes from at http://www.kushiro.com/index2.html. Note you can't literally drive straight from Hokkaido to the rest of Japan; it's connected only by a rail tunnel (in fact, the longest one in the world, the Seikan Tunnel—33 1/2 miles long). Presumably Keima took his bike on the train (or took a ferry) and continued his journey from Aomori on the Honshu side.

Since Chihiro doesn't quite grasp Keima's "Incredible Journey," she assumes she misheard, and is straining to find an alternate explanation by thinking of other words that sound like "Kushiro," but are

spelled with different kanji. She's straining so hard, in fact, that she's making words up, stringing unrelated kanji together—not unlike those "Asian" tattoos a lot of people get, know what I'm saying? Clockwise from upper right, she comes up with *Ku-Shi-Ro* ("painful death backbone"), *Ku-Shiro* ("longtime representative"), *Kushi-Ro* ("haircomb bribe"), another *Kushi-Ro* ("skewer butterbur"—"skewer" is one of those few kanji that look exactly like what they mean) and finally, another *Ku-Shiro* ("running white").

To be fair, this kind of play on words is pretty common in Japan, but it can be hard on the translator, who notes her own name, Dana Lewis, could be spelled out in Japanese with the kanji "mustard barfing frog of the pomegranate chair." Even people born and raised in Japan have these problems—Chihiro's attempt to draw out the proper kanji (she literally asks Keiichi, "You mean the *kushi* that uses the radical for 'gold' and the *ro* from the *douro*, 'road'?"—which is, finally, correct) in 18.1 is also a common gesture there, like asking someone to spell an unfamiliar name for you. For some reason, "H" manga artists are the worst offenders—they can never just settle for something like a "Dirk Diggler," but glory in strings of kanji with fifteen simultaneous different meanings, probably all wrong.

34.1: Interestingly, Keima calls him "son" here.

50.2: And Bell calls him "father."

51.4: Yokan is a kind of Japanese Jell-O® made out of azuki beans. I've said it before, but I believe that while Japan has developed the comics industry to heights undreamed of here, their own civilization benefited from Western non-bean-based dessert technology.

53: The bangle holding Bell's ponytail has a German motto very appropriate to her character: *Auf Regen folgt Sonnenschein* ("after the rain comes sunshine").

91.3: The sign reads, "Everybody's Tea Room," in case you've been seeing it for years in this manga and wondered what it meant.

115.3: That's what the man said. Is he "breaking the fourth wall"? Perhaps that's why Keiichi is looking very "realistic" here.

115.4: Takano is speaking with a bit of a country accent here. The gift bag is from the fisheries at Todowara, a famous scenic point on Hokkaido's Nemuro peninsula—hence her remark about how the present will only keep a day. Part of the absurdity of the scene is that normal parents, if they wanted to send this kind of gift from home, just would have it mailed overnight.

116.2: Literally, Takano said *amadera*, which is the Japanese term for a Buddhist convent. Such nuns shave their heads just like Buddhist monks, which is probably why they rarely get to be in anime or manga, and all the action roles go to the Catholic nuns, like in *St. Tail, Hellsing, and Chrono Crusade*. Presumably artists feel they can't do much with a bald heroine, whereas with nuns you can have those veils flying around, and, of course, a little bit of hair poking out from underneath for effect. Of course, the irony is that Keiichi *does* live in the temple of a former Buddhist monk (some day that guy is going to come back when the cast least expects it) but you wouldn't exactly call it a place of peace, quiet, and celibacy. Although one out of three ain't bad.

116.4: Although it's supposed to be the early volumes of *OMG!* that drop the

'80s references, Takano is referring here to a classic manga from the creator of *Inu-Yasha*, Rumiko Takahashi's 15-volume *Maison Ikkoku*. Many people consider *Maison Ikkoku* to be Takahashi's most satisfying work, as she took her skills at situation comedy into an everyday (i.e., no aliens, martial arts, or mythic past) background and wrote a love story with a beginning, a middle, and an ending (the editor tugs his collar nervously at the thought *Oh My Goddess!* is now up to Vol. 32). The *Maison Ikkoku* manga ran between 1980 and 1987; the 96-episode anime version from 1986 to 1988. All of the manga and part of the anime are available from Viz Media.

Maison Ikkoku is also the name of the boarding house where the main characters live; the hero, Yusaku Godai, a young man who failed his college entrance exams and is now studying to try again, is in love with the house's manager, Kyoko Otonashi. Takano may have thought Belldandy a good "match" for her, as Kyoko is also a beautiful, mysterious, long-haired young woman. Other tenants of Maison Ikkoku include Mrs. Ichinose, a fat, drunken middle-aged gossip who lives there with her son and (rarely-seen) husband, and Mr. Yotsuya, a Kramer-like man of mystery who knocks a hole in Godai's wall in order to pop in uninvited. Yotsuya knocks a hole in Godai's other wall so he can peep on Ms. Roppongi, a red-headed, hard-drinking, little-wearing bar hostess. I wonder who Takano assigned those roles to?

135.5: For "homeland," Takano uses the old term *naichi* ("inner land"), which during WWII referred to Japan proper, as opposed to the territory overseas Japan occupied as colonies. Of course, the joke here is that she's from Hokkaido, which *is* part of Japan proper.

140.2: Continuing in her hick mode, Takano is amazed at "all" the TV channels you can pick up here as opposed to her hometown. They have cable and DSS in Hokkaido, too, but Takano isn't letting that concern her.

140.4: Yuko Miyamura, born in 1972, achieved fame for her portrayal of Asuka in the original Japanese version of *Neon Genesis Evangelion*. In an essay at the back of Volume Four of the English-language edition of the *Evangelion* manga, Miyamura discusses the role—a performance that (as with several other leading roles in the series) strove for an unusual personal intensity; *The End of Evangelion* won a Japan Academy Award, the only one ever given to a non-Hayao Miyazaki anime. The actress is portrayed here with the hairstyle she wore during a memorable cameo as the TV instructor in the late Kinji Fukasaku's final film, *Battle Royale* (released in December of 2000 in Japan; one month after this story originally ran in *Afternoon* magazine).

141.3: Jenga—from Hasbro—is the tower-building game Urd and Skuld are playing for TV rights in "The Endless Battle, Part One" in *Oh My Goddess!* Vol. 19/20: *Sora Unchained* (the last of the "flopped" series, which story-wise comes immediately before Vol. 21, the first of the "unflopped" series—please see "Letters to the Enchantress" in Vol. 21 for a lengthy explanation ^_^). *Dobon* bears some resemblance to Uno, but is played with a standard deck of cards. Kyoko Ino offers an English-language perspective at: http://www.ii-park.net/~q-dobon/index.html

143.1: The joke here is that proper parents would never teach their daughters a game like mahjong, considered somewhat

masculine and "working clarse" (as Student Grant would put it). It further shows how upside down Takano and Keima's universe is. Still more bizarre, mothers in *America* used to teach their daughters mahjong. The game was introduced (with modified rules) to the United States in the 1920s and '30s and was popular in particular among female players for several decades thereafter; many retirees still play this version. You may have heard that there's a whole genre of mahjong manga in Japan, which is true. But like shojo manga, which can pretty much be about anything as long as there's a relationship involved somewhere, all mahjong manga need to keep their cred is to show the occasional game.

When I was in high school in the mid-eighties, I was fortunate that Kinokuniya (at least, the one in San Francisco—BART to Powell St., then the 38 Geary to Japantown) didn't yet shrink-wrap their manga. As you might guess, this policy not only enabled me to scope out them mature-readers titles (most notably Kazuo Koike's *Brothers*, which made my eyes manga-wide) but to browse titles in general.

This was just a few years before companies in North America began to publish manga in English on a regular basis (Dark Horse started doing so in 1988), and, although there were certainly otaku like myself, there wasn't much sense yet of an otaku market for import manga. In those days clerks seemed ever so slightly appalled that *gaijin* knew manga existed; you got the impression they'd much rather have you buy a nice book on Zen gardens or flower arranging. The advantage of all this, though, was that to browse a Reagan-era Kinokuniya was to explore manga as the average Japanese would know it, instead of how the hardcore fan (i.e., otaku), whether Japanese or American, would know it. And that ultimately made for more interesting discoveries, going away from just the things you know you'll like, to things you didn't even know existed.

Like, well, mahjong manga. At fifteen, just hitting the racks at random, I came across a two-volume series called *Rastapai* (*pai* is a word used in Japanese to refer to the tiles used to play mahjong), written by Karibu Marei (another pen name of Garon Tsuchiya—itself also a pen name—the author of Dark Horse's forthcoming manga *Old Boy*) and drawn by Shin Morimura. The cover certainly wouldn't give you a clue that the manga had anything to do with mahjong—it featured a drawing of the eponymous hero, a grinning Japanese guy in his twenties with good hair, cocking his finger at the audience and sporting black Ray-Bans, which, I was to learn, he never took off. Tom Cruise's wearing them in 1983's *Risky Business* had revived the glasses in a big way—Cruise's "Joel Goodson" character from the movie was the guy you dreamed of being in those years. Being, not doing; this was long before any of that *shonen ai* talk got started about him.

Rastapai is a fairly obscure title today. In fact I don't think anything by Shin Morimura has ever been published in English (his successful boxing saga *Paradise* runs currently in Kodansha's *Young Sunday* magazine), although he reportedly gave great assistance to the launch of the manga *Planetes*, written and drawn by Morimura's former assistant Makoto Yukimura. And it's probably not all that noteworthy a manga in the grand scheme of things. But it was noteworthy to *me*—I'd never seen anything like it before. The story was basically just about this guy who would make some money during the day on construction jobs (we saw as little of that as possible) and by night would get into as many schemes as possible, usually involving women, and always taking breaks to play a little mahjong. He wasn't

exactly a low-life; he was more like a lower-middle-life. The author of *Rastapai* spelled his pen name with kanji that read "Karibu Marei," but spelled it in English as "Caribu Marley," and given that and the manga's title, it's no surprise the story ended with the hero beamed up one night by space Rastas—floating in midair surrounded by mahjong tiles, still grinning—and still wearing his Ray-Bans.

When I was fifteen, I didn't know you *could* draw a comic about that. What made the biggest impression on me wasn't works of fantasy or science fiction, because I was used to the idea that comics could be about those things. What really grabbed me was the idea of a comic which was about real people in real life—maybe an amped up, surrealistic version of real life, but still real life. In North America comics about "real life" are often seen as efforts toward artistic expression—psychological, confessional, or perhaps political—but these manga were more like really cool TV sitcoms. I didn't know it at the time, but works like *Rastapai* were an expression of the confidence comics have in Japan, where you don't need a big concept or backstory, but a creator can just in effect say, "Okay, so there was this guy who—" It was indicative of the power of manga that I didn't know anything about mahjong before I read *Rastapai*, and didn't know anything about it afterwards, yet the story itself had made a huge impression on me. It's also a reminder of how little categories like "mahjong manga" can really mean, any more than "shojo manga" or "shonen manga." As always, it comes down to the individual story, not necessarily the supposed genre or demographic.

I want to apologize to the people whose letters we received at the last minute, including Olivia Thompson and Benjamin Urrutia (as you know, this column is prepared some time before it shows up in the bookstores); it turned out *Letters to the Enchantress* netted more mail this time than the six pages allocated to this volume; but it's good to know its correspondence is growing. We'll do our best to run them next time!

Dear Goddess Office,

Ah! Where to start? This is my first time writing a manga publication, period, much less one that holds the designation as my favorite series in both anime and manga (truthfully, it holds that spot alongside another project Kosuke Fujishima has been involved in [he did many of its character designs—CGH], *Sakura Taisen*). So I'm actually a little apprehensive about just how I'm supposed to sum up my general thoughts about something I appreciate so much, without it coming out more than a little underwhelming in the process.

Well, that impossibility established, I'll get the fan in me out of the way in saying that I definitely love the series in all its forms and I'm really glad that I finally took the plunge and began collecting the manga on which the anime series is based several months back, just prior to Dark Horse's announcement that they would be re-releasing the series in its authentic format. So, while I'm not new to anime (been watching that in some form since Leiji Matsumoto's work was first shown on U.S. shores back in the late '70s/early '80s) or to *OMG!* as a series, I am relatively new to manga itself and it wasn't too long after discovering that my favorite series had thrived in this format for years that I made the rather speedy conclusion that I had darn well better get on board.

As a result, with a handful of volumes already under my belt I'm continually blown away by the masterful work that Kosuke

Fujishima puts to paper in both written and illustrative forms. The characters come out of the work in a way that few others can claim—in any medium—and it's a testament to his talents (and of those surrounding him) across the board that this is the case. I care what happens to Belldandy, Urd, Keiichi, and the others as I've been drawn into the stories, and it's not just a case of appreciating how good this work is on a critical level, but also on a personal one.

Anyhow, with the "fan letter" out of the way I'll be sure to try to write in with more specific comments about future storylines as best I can, and in addition to thanking all of y'all for the hard work that I know you put into the translations, publishing process, etc.—and for Dark Horse's long commitment to the series—I also wanted to thank you for the detailed notes at the end of each volume that explain the historical or cultural relevance of many of the references that are made throughout the Goddesses' adventures. It's very interesting reading (at least, to this history major, and one attempting to learn more and more about the Japanese culture) and I hope y'all will keep it coming!

Until next time then, all the best!

Mr. Kathan D. McCallister
Fort Worth, Texas

P.S. I'll attach a copy of the humble piece of fan art (a manipulated sketch) as a separate attachment as well in the case that my letter doesn't make the cut, feel free to edit it in any way that's helpful, and you have any interest in using it. It's certainly "okay to print." Thanks.

P.P.S. Hope Milwaukie, Oregon is treating a number of y'all well; while away from Texas for a couple of years I lived only a block or two from Dark Horse's headquarters and would often pass its offices while traveling. Stay dry!

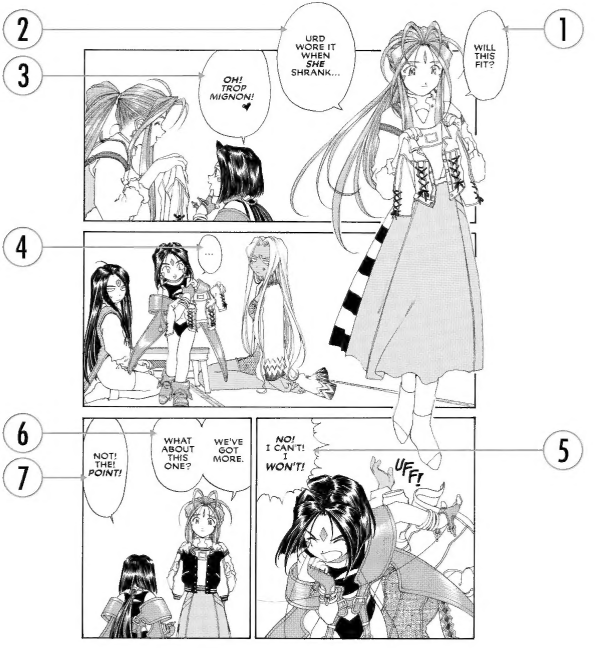
I love the expression "all of y'all," especially when the Geto Boys use it. Now, they're from Houston, but Fort Worth is the finest town in that part of Texas. I remember going to see the Soviet Space exhibit there in 1991—the first time the USSR had ever brought an exhibit of that size to America, hauling out a massive amount of capsules, rockets, and other hardware, much of it previously top secret. Unfortunately, the USSR collapsed during the exhibit and I heard that the exhibit and its staff got stuck here; many of the artifacts ended up being auctioned off by Sotheby's.

Not only is that a fine (or as they say in Texas, "fahn") piece of fan art, but, most importantly, you actually sent it in! I don't know why it's so hard to get people to send in their fan art, but I'm hoping that people will take inspiration from this. To paraphrase Bernie Casey in *Flash Gordon*, "May the deed of Mr. McCallister be an example to all the kingdoms of manga!"

—CGH

STOP! This is the back of the book!

This manga collection is translated into English, but arranged in right-to-left reading format to maintain the artwork's visual orientation as originally drawn and published in Japan. If you've never read comics this way before, take a look at the diagram below to give yourself an idea of how to go about it. Basically, you'll be starting in the upper right-hand corner, and will read each word balloon and panel moving right-to-left. It may take a little getting used to, but you should get the hang of it very quickly. Have fun! If this is the millionth manga you've read this way, never mind. ^_^

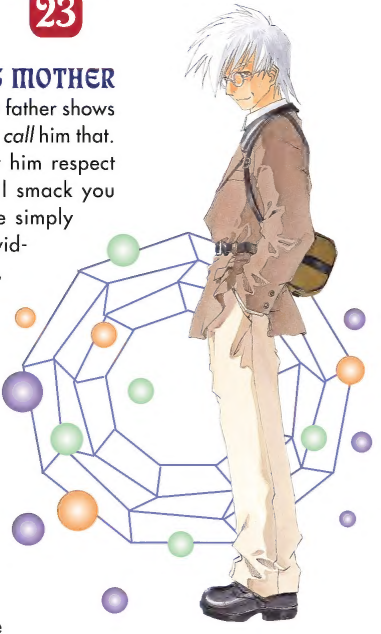


Oh My Goddess!

ああっ女神さまっ 23

NO SOONER HAS URD'S MOTHER

left, than Keiichi and Megumi's father shows up! But whatever you do, don't *call* him that. It's just "Keima." Try to show him respect by saying "Father," and he'll smack you upside the head. You see, he simply wants to be treated as an individual. Also, if you're a *woman*, don't approach any closer than one meter to Keima—because he'll run away. Only his daughter is permitted that close—and, of course, his wife. Well then, what in the world must *she* be like? Don't call "Mother" that either—because you're about to meet her too!



Dark Horse continues the *Oh My Goddess!* saga, now in the much-requested, inexpensive right-to-left format!

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